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**PSYCHIC TENDENCIES  
OF TO-DAY**

*Books by Alfred W. Martin*

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Psychic Tendencies of Today

Faith in a Future Life  
(Foundations)

Great Religious Teachers of the East

The Life of Jesus  
In the Light of the Higher Criticism

The Dawn of Christianity  
(Sequel to the preceding)

Ideals of Life  
From the Bibles of the Great Religions.



# PSYCHIC TENDENCIES OF TO-DAY

*An Exposition and Critique of New Thought,  
Christian Science, Spiritualism, Psychical Re-  
search (Sir Oliver Lodge) and Modern Materi-  
alism in Relation to Immortality*

BY

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## FOREWORD

THIS book is based upon a series of four addresses recently given in the Hudson Theater, New York, under the auspices of the "League for Political Education." They were delivered without notes and without any thought of their eventual preparation for the press. When, however, it was proposed that they be put into book-form the lectures were revised and enlarged, though the essential argument of each remains unchanged.

What is here essayed is a candid examination and critical estimate of (a) the New Thought and kindred cults, (b) the claim of Sir Oliver Lodge and other psychical researchers to have objective evidence for personal immortality and of communication with deceased persons (c) the counter-claim of Modern Materialists (notably Haeckel) to have disproved the legitimacy of every argument in support of faith in human survival of death.

Introductory to these three parts of the book

is the initial chapter dealing chiefly with (a) the causes for the rise of modern psychic movements, analogous to those of ancient times, (b) reasons for the widespread interest these movements have aroused and (c) the attitude which ought to be assumed by those persons who, like the author, take a position of entire neutrality toward all "psychic" theories and institutions.

The reader is respectfully requested to keep strictly in mind the fact that while the author is identified with the Society for Ethical Culture of New York, this organization is not to be regarded as in any way committed to the views he has here presented.

NEW YORK.



# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
<b>I</b> INTRODUCTORY—THE   CAUSES   OF MODERN INTEREST IN PSYCHIC PHENOMENA. THE ETHICAL AT- TITUDE TOWARD THEM . . . .	1
<b>II</b> THE NEW THOUGHT:—ITS ORIGINS AND CLAIMS . . . . . (With incidental reference to Chris- tian Science and kindred cults)	34
<b>III</b> OBJECTIVE EVIDENCE FOR LIFE AFTER DEATH . . . . . (With special reference to Sir Oliver Lodge's "Raymond" and inci- dental reference to the views of Sir William Barrett and Sir A. Conan Doyle)	79
<b>IV</b> MODERN MATERIALISM AND REBIRTH OF THE MODERN HOPE . . . .	126



# PSYCHIC TENDENCIES OF TO-DAY

## I

### MODERN INTEREST IN PSYCHIC PHENOMENA

THE psychic phenomena to which we shall give special attention may be conveniently defined as utterances or acts that seem to give evidence of supra-mundane agency, defying explanation in terms of known terrestrial causes.

Such phenomena are identified with a number of modern movements, notably Spiritualism, Psychical Research, Theosophy, Christian Science and the New Thought.

Common to them all is a certain occult character, using that word in its simple, original sense as given in our standard dictionaries. The word "occult" is there defined as "that which is not apparent on mere inspection," "under cover" and therefore needing disclosure; "strange, obscure; not intelligible by the

ordinary canons of interpretation " and thus needing clarification.

For instance, the alleged intercourse of deceased persons with people still living on the earth is a phenomenon by no means " apparent on mere inspection " of its manifestation and to that extent, at least, Spiritualism is occult.

Trances, phantasms, materializations, subliminal activities and the other phenomena with which psychical research is concerned are, in the same sense, occult. So, too, are the esoteric ideas upon which Theosophists dwell; ideas " under cover " of words that hide their meaning, even as do the " astral " bodies their substance.

The text-book of Christian Science furnishes the reader a " Key to the Scriptures." Evidently, something is locked, hidden, " not intelligible by the ordinary canons of interpretation " and, as such, occult.

Here, then, are characteristics common to a number of modern movements, and because of these we are warranted in describing them as psychic and occult.

How shall we account for the rise of these movements and for the widespread interest they have aroused? And what should be the

attitude toward them of persons who stand outside the pale of their fellowship? These are the three questions to which our attention is to be directed.

At the outset it will be worth our while to note that interest in psychic phenomena antedates the modern era by centuries. There were many and varied psychic movements in ancient India, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Palestine,—all of them bearing some measure of resemblance to those of our own day and each of them originating, as did the latter, in an age of doubt.

There were the Orphic and Dionysian cults of Greece, with their orgiastic rituals, in which the worshiper believed himself literally possessed by the deity and, in consequence, competent to do miraculous things.

More famous were the Eleusinian Mysteries that flourished in the hey-day of Athenian prosperity, when Greek philosophy had run its course and a spiritual interregnum occurred. Esoteric doctrines and secret ceremonies characterized this cult, while the consummation of membership was union with the gods and a guarantee of life that death could not quench.



In ancient Egypt were the *Isis and Osiris* mysteries, as occult as those of Eleusis, granting to their votaries not only the privilege and power of transcending the boundary of death while they were yet alive on the earth, but also the supreme honor of entering the very presence of the gods and receiving from them mystic communications, inexplicable to outsiders just because they were mystic.

Among the ancient Jews, in the days of "tribal" organization (circa 1000 B. C.), *divination* was a profession and a species of Spiritualism obtained, witness the story of Saul, who, by means of a medium from Endor, called up from Sheol (the realm of all the dead) the prophet Samuel, in order that from the latter the King might receive desired information as to the outcome of his conflict with the Philistines.<sup>1</sup>

In Rome, about the year 400 B. C., stood the temple of Apollo Medicus, corresponding to "the first Church of Christ Scientist," in so far as, like the latter, it was dedicated to Divine healing. Moreover, it was built in honor of the God of healing because, in 430 B. C., He

<sup>1</sup> I Sam. xxviii.

had expelled a plague from the imperial city. Two centuries later, another such temple was erected and dedicated to the son of Apollo Medicus,—Æsculapius, called “The Divine Physician.”

At the beginning of our era there lived in the city of Tyana in Asia Minor the celebrated Apollonius, whose marvelous power as a healer led the emperor Caracalla to worship him as a god. Nor is it any exaggeration, or misstatement, to say that Apollonius was the spiritual progenitor of Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, because (a) he resorted neither to drugs nor to any material aids in the curing of disease: (b) his healing gift extended to “absent” treatments; (c) he drew no distinction between organic and functional disorders, for the reason, as he said, that “God is the healer and He is omnipotent”; (d) he held that this healing power might be possessed by any one who would enter upon spiritual preparation for it, by developing faculties not ordinarily employed.<sup>2</sup> When Marcus Aurelius, emperor and philosopher, ascended the throne and

<sup>2</sup> See “Apollonius Tyanacus,” by Albert Reville; also the article in the *Encycl. Brit.* ninth edition on “Apollonius.”

Christianity was struggling for control of the Roman empire, there occurred an invasion of Syrian and Persian occultisms which Harnack, in his "Expansion of Christianity," described as "a swarm of quasi-religious rivals of Christianity contending in that fierce competition for religious supremacy."

Still later appeared certain Jewish mystics who had worked out a "Key to the Scriptures" (Old Testament) called the "Cabala," antedating Mrs. Eddy's "Key" by eight centuries and unlocking an altogether different set of meanings from Biblical words and phrases.

Let these illustrations suffice to show that present day interest in occult ideas and psychic phenomena is but a recrudescence of ancient interest in them.

And precisely as the ancient Greek mysteries followed directly in the wake of philosophical systems that had failed to satisfy spiritual wants, so these modern occultisms, too, arose in a corresponding age of doubt and due to a corresponding bankruptcy of philosophy. In Plato's day there were no "mysteries"; only when Greek philosophy had spent itself in the vain effort to produce a

satisfying theory of the universe and to furnish the consolations of which men were in need, did these ancient occultisms arise with the promise of supplying the deficiencies of philosophy.

Similarly in the first half of the nineteenth century there was no mysticism, no occultism of any account. 'Twas only after Spencer's "Synthetic Philosophy" and Darwin's "Origin of Species" had left men spiritually cold and hungry that modern occultisms arose, each seeking to serve as a "satisfying substitute" for the systems that had been weighed in the balance and were found wanting.

To avoid possible misunderstanding let me say at once that I am not a Spiritualist, not a Theosophist, not a Christian Scientist, not a New-Thought-representative, in short, not identified with any of the current forms of occultism. And perhaps I may be permitted to add that a certain advantage attaches to independency of these movements. For, then, one can approach them without that partiality which is every whit as fatal to equity as is prejudice. Every disciple is partial to his master,—a truth which Æsop set forth in the familiar fable of the forester and the lion.

Walking together in the woods they fell to discussing the question, which is the stronger, a man or a lion? Failing to bring the issue to a decision they chanced upon a statue representing a man in the act of throwing down a lion. "There," cried the woodsman, "you see the man is the stronger." To which the lion replied, "Ah, yes, but their positions would have been reversed had a lion been the sculptor."

Concerning prejudice let me say that I do not know what it means to be prejudiced for or against any of these movements. Indeed, I cannot understand a person being in favor of or opposed to a given belief. I want simply to know what is true and to avoid being deceived or fooled. Dear as are to me the words God, soul and immortality, there is one word dearer still, *viz., truth*. If a man be satisfied with the evidence in support of Theism or immortality and has his mind made up, he is a coward if he fail to show his colors and connect himself with an organization that stands for these; whereas, if the evidence fail to satisfy and his mind is still open on the subject he must perforce refuse allegiance. That, I take it, is what the ethics of religious affiliation requires.



*the causes*  
 Coming now to (the causes) that conspired to produce the various psychic or occult movements of our time and the increasing interest they have aroused, let us mention first the least significant cause, one which Oliver Wendell Holmes, the most humorous of our American poets, described as "the boundless excitability of people on all subjects pertaining to medicine and the soul." In all ages and among all peoples this sort of excitability has obtained. Tylor, in his "Primitive Culture," tells us that it was a conspicuous characteristic of primitive man, the chief subject of his speculation, the ground of his superstitions. Hence this modern manifestation of excitability over these matters, far from being a new phenomenon, is but a psychical survival, a case of atavism, or reversion to an ancestral attitude toward medico-psychic interests.

Next in the succession of causes is the deathless desire for some positive knowledge of the unseen world, of the mystery of birth and death and of personality, knowledge not furnished by any of the established religions. This deathless desire, it was, that brought many an ancient Egyptian and Greek occultism into existence, promising to do for its devotees what

the religions of those lands had failed to do, *viz.*, to lift their souls above the transiency of perishable matter and guarantee them everlasting life. Similarly, many a modern occult movement owes its origin to the selfsame passionate desire, each in its own way purporting to gratify the irrepressible yearning for positive knowledge of the whence and the whither of man. In vain did the philosopher affirm that 'tis foolish to trouble oneself about it, in vain did the scientist say that it is impossible for man to know; in vain did the Positivist-poet, George Eliot, point to corporate immortality, as the only form of personal survival that can be rationally anticipated; living "in minds made better by our presence"; in vain did the materialist maintain that annihilation is the last word of educated thought, inasmuch as man's spiritual nature is to be interpreted only in terms of matter and force. The toiling, struggling, hoping millions refused to accept these verdicts, refused to believe that "man is dust merely and returns to dust." Their spokesman was Oliver Wendell Holmes, who, as he listened to the consensus of negative and iconoclastic thought, exclaimed:

“Is this the whole sad story of creation,  
 Told by its toiling millions o’er and o’er;  
 One glimpse of day, then black annihilation,  
 A sunlit passage to a sunless shore?”

And the answer was Spiritualism, Theosophy, Myers’ subliminal self, Christian Science, the New Thought — each in its own chosen way seeking to satisfy the hungry human heart.

Closely connected with this second in the series of causes under consideration, is the revival of scientific study of Nature in the first half of the last century (rivaling that of the ancient Greeks), threatening the very life of all the finer sensibilities, as well as of poetry and even religion. That passion for scientific analysis struck terror into the heart of many a serious soul. It seemed as though in consequence of this highly specialized intellectual pursuit the spiritual nature of man was doomed and religion destined to disappear. Wordsworth, contemplating the trend and influence of the scientific world, cried out:

“Great God! I’d rather be a pagan  
 Suckled in a creed outworn,  
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
 Have glimpse of Proteus, rising from the sea  
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.”

Emerson, too, conscious of the same spiritual distress, declared: "I see movement, I hear aspirations, but I see not how the great God prepares to satisfy the heart in the new order of things."<sup>3</sup> And Holmes, again, added his testimony to the distraught condition of the times.

"Give back our faith, ye mystery-solving lynxes,  
 Robe us once more in heaven-aspiring creeds;  
 Better were dreaming Egypt with her sphinxes,  
 The stony convent with its cross and beads."

And forthwith there appeared a succession of psychic movements, each prepared to exchange Proteus and Triton for the grander creations of a mystic religion and to substitute for Egyptian myth and mediæval fancy, a gospel rich in spiritual benefits for all who would adopt it.

In passing it may be said that the two last lines of Holmes' verse belie the best that is in us and in our nobler moods we irresistibly realize it. For, the happiness of the Egyptian and the mediæval heaven had their antithesis in the horrors of a hell. Who of us would not prefer black annihilation to endless heaven at

<sup>3</sup> "Works." Riverside Edition, Vol. X, p. 210.

the price of endless hell? Let us all sleep, if need be, in a night that will have no morning, but do not mock us with the offer of an endless song that shall have for its echo an endless groan of the burning lips of an outcast brother.

And this suggests a fourth explanation for the rise of these psychic movements, *viz.*, the intense revulsion from those forbidding doctrines ardently accepted in the middle of the last century — a God filled with implacable wrath over the fall of his first children; their posterity cursed and doomed because of that fall; the wrath of God appeased only by an adequate atoning sacrifice in the benefits of which all may share; heaven for those who accept the terms of salvation; eternal damnation for those who reject them.

Henry Ward Beecher, referring to this creed in a contribution to the *North American Review*, said, "If the truth of evolution led to unbelief, it would not be so bad as that impious and malignant conception of God and His government which underlies all mediæval and most of modern theology."

That revulsion and the cry for a substitute-creed must be set down as one of the causes



that gave rise to Spiritualism, Theosophy, Christian Science and the New Thought. Read the literature of these movements and note how each recoils from this brood of beliefs and offers its own peculiar substitutes for them. Turn, for example, to the only authorized life of Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, written by Sibyl Wilbur. Here we are told that the father of the foundress of Christian Science entertained these revolting beliefs and grew alarmed at the refractory reliance of his daughter on God's love, in the face of predestination and unconditional election. That struggle with her Calvinistic father for the triumph of a religion of love, Mrs. Eddy declared, left a deep impression upon her and we see it reflected in the pages of "Science and Health."

But weightiest among the causes that brought these various movements into being is one suggested by the fact that they all originated about the same time and in response to the same spiritual need. The same year that marked the centennial of our political emanci-<sup>!!</sup>pation witnessed also a number of spiritual emancipations. Recall what occurred in 1876. In that year the celebrated Daniel D. Home,

a Scottish immigrant, wrote his "Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism"—the first literary exposition of the movement. In that year Mme. Blavatsky published her "Isis Unveiled," having just founded, in New York City, the "Theosophical Movement." In that year Sir Wm. Crookes and Mr. Frederick W. H. Myers began those investigations of spiritistic phenomena that led to the formation, in 1882, of the Society for Psychical Research. In that year Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy (then Mrs. Patterson) organized "the Christian Science Association"—the germ out of which, in 1879, the "first Church of Christ, Scientist" was evolved. In that year, a decade after the death of P. P. Quimby, his most intimate follower, W. F. Evans, contested the claims of Mrs. Eddy and the New Thought Movement extended its influence far beyond the boundaries of Maine in which Quimby had first brought its principles to light.

What, now, is the significance of the synchronous rise of these movements? It means that during the generation prior to 1876 a succession of disquieting discoveries had been made, shaking people out of their dogmatic

slumber and plunging them into a sea of skepticism that threatened to engulf them. Spiritual life-preservers were in immediate demand and it was met, in part, by a supply of psychic movements, each in its own way proffering the needed help.

What were the more important of these disquieting discoveries? First may be mentioned the relation of the Copernican astronomy to the generally-accepted idea of God. Though it was as long ago as 1543 that the illustrious astronomer set forth the heliocentric theory of the cosmos, supplanting the geocentric theory of Ptolemy, it was not until the second quarter of the last century that the bearing of his discovery upon theology began to be generally appreciated. Given an infinite universe and the Ptolemaic theism which conceived of God as a master-mechanic, fashioning the cosmos from without, had to be surrendered, for the Copernican universe has no "outside" and while, for some atheism seemed the logical conclusion, others held that God must be reconceived as *within* Nature, distinct yet inseparable from Nature. Given hymns and prayers of the Jewish and Christian communions, all based on the Ptolemaic astronomy and con-

sistency required that they be sung no more but replaced by others in keeping with the discovered Copernican cosmology.

In 1835 D. F. Strauss published his "mythical" theory of the life of Jesus and F. C. Baur his critique of the documents on which the biographies of Jesus were based, showing how much of the gospel-story betrays a "tendenz," or design on the part of the writers. Such conclusions struck terror into the hearts of those who fancied the gospel reports of sayings and incidents were to be accepted at their face value.

In 1842 Sir Charles Lyell, the eminent geologist, made his famous excursion to Niagara Falls and from a careful survey of the canyon-walls discovered that the Niagara river had been wearing away the rock on either side for not less than 300,000 years to the point where now the river makes its thunderous descent. This discovery disposed of the established notion that the antiquity of the earth did not exceed 6000 years.

In 1844 Robert Chambers published his "Vestiges of a Natural History of Creation," propounding a disturbing theory of man's origin because utterly at variance with the

Biblical story, vouched for only by the revelations of Nature's book, with its pages of petrified flora and fauna — evidence that was soon to be reënforced by the ampler discoveries of Darwin.

In 1845 appeared Büchner's "*Kraft und Stoff*" (force and matter), followed in '56 by Moleschott's "*Licht und Leben*" (Light and Life), both works attempting an interpretation of the universe in materialistic terms and seeming to strike a fatal blow at the belief in immortality.

In 1859 a supremely disconcerting and disquieting publication appeared, the epoch-making book of Charles Darwin, "The Origin of Species." ~~Herein~~ Darwin set forth — more fully and conclusively than had Kant, Goethe, Buffon, Lamarck, Chambers and Erasmus Darwin — the fact of man's ascent, by evolution from lower life-forms, as opposed to the older theory of his descent from a primordial perfection. And according to this earlier view, it was said by good old Dr. South, that Aristotle and Plato were but "melancholy ruins" of the greatness embodied in Adam. Here then was a discovery that dispensed with the "Christian" scheme of salvation for "fallen"



man. In other words it was now made plain that man is not "lost" and therefore does not need to be "saved." Rather is man ignorant, undeveloped, still carrying about with him traces of his animal ancestry and requiring above all else eradication of his brute-inheritance, which John Fiske, the expositor of Darwinism, declared is the real "original sin."

In 1874 the researches of Tyndall in the sphere of physics culminated in the celebrated "Belfast" address, in which he declared that "in matter lies the promise and potency of all terrestrial life."

→ What wonder, then, that in the light of these revolutionizing discoveries and publications thousands of thoughtful people found themselves bereft of the familiar sources of religious comfort and inspiration; robbed of inherited beliefs they had tacitly accepted as true for all time; disfellowshipped from religious organizations that had their *raison d'être* in those very beliefs which science had now discredited? No wonder that in 1876 earnest, serious souls found themselves in the same plight as the "Godfearers," mentioned in the "New Testament book of Acts." The "Godfearer" was a deeply-religious man dissatisfied with

existing types of religion. He was without a church-home, yet he felt the need of getting into vital touch with something transcendently holy. His difficulty was that he could not accept the established ways of satisfying this need. He went from one religious organization to another, finding everywhere something that appealed to him, yet nowhere all that he wanted. In the Jewish synagogue, for example, he found a noble monotheism that made a powerful appeal to his sense of a divine Power in the world, but he found here also ceremonial observances that impressed him as antiquated and out of vital relation to the spiritual needs of modern men. In the meeting-house of the worshipers of Mithra he found a religious mysticism that seemed to provide for his spiritual life a sense of union with something indefinable, mysterious, yet real. But here also he found a mythology and ritualistic forms quite at variance with the best educated thought of the time. And so here again, as in the case of the synagogue, he recognized that which appealed to him and also that which restrained him from identifying himself with the organization. Another day he went into the temple of the state religion, the official Ro-

man religion. Here he observed a deification and worship of the emperor that repelled him. Here was neither the noble monotheism of the synagogue nor the mysticism of the mystery religions. Indeed, what he found in this pagan temple seemed scarcely worthy to be called religion. Thus, he became involuntarily a spiritual wanderer, a religious man without a church-home. Precisely so was it with the Godfearers of 1876. They, too, were spiritual wanderers, deeply-religious natures yet without a church-home.

As we look back to their spiritual experience following upon those revolutionizing discoveries of the preceding generation we may liken it to a deluge which has gradually blotted out one after another the familiar landmarks of traditional religion, leaving the ark of faith afloat upon a watery waste, with no sign of subsidence to cheer and encourage the spiritually bereft. Day after day did they seek dry land on which their ark might safely rest, when lo, at length, the doves which they had sent forth in different directions returned, one bringing the amaranthine flower of Spiritualism; another, the lotus-lily of Theosophy; a third, the balsam-bud of Christian Science; a fourth, the

healing-leaves of New Thought. In other words, each of these movements arose to stem the tide of skepticism, to check the growth of philosophical materialism and of that practical materialism which is far more dangerous than any erroneous speculations of the philosophers; the materialism, whose gospel is creature-comforts, sensualism and starvation of the spirit; life self-centered and unconsecrated. For, our inner life is all starving and forlorn save as it touches some transcendent good and gets into vital relation with what has eternal and infinite worth. And whenever serious souls are seeking *that*, they are in search of a satisfying religion.

So poor and petty are these human lives of ours, even at their best, that we feel the need of something greater than they which they may subserve and thus be made worth while; something infinitely beautiful and holy, a supreme spiritual Ideal working itself out in the evolution of the world, one qualified to invigorate us with a divine patience and courage, to save us from cynicism and despair, and to sustain in us that enthusiasm without which no worthy work can ever be done.

In passing it may be permitted me to re-

mark that not only did the Ethical movement originate in 1876, but its birth was due to the selfsame cause that brought these psychic movements into existence, *viz.*, the deeply-felt need of a satisfying religion to take the place of the Judaism and Christianity that had failed to make a satisfying appeal. And their failure was due in large measure to their claim to have a complete and final revelation, a fixed and finished system of faith and practice. These men and women, these "God-fearers" of 1876 were part of the unchurched, untempled host, looking for a religion that would satisfy. And as neither Church nor Synagogue, nor yet again the extreme radicals, furnished the fellowship of which they were in search, no alternative remained but to organize one of their own. And this they did, mark you, not in opposition to religion, not in despair of religion, nor yet again in the hope of finding in philanthropy and moral education a substitute for religion, nay, but in the hope of working out a satisfying religion.

It remains to answer the last of the three questions, *viz.*, what should be the spirit in which one not identified with any of these psychic movements should approach them and

deal with them? Too common is the practice of rudely relegating them all to the limbo of the ridiculous and the irrational, without the slightest regard for what justice and love require of us. Yet 'tis a compound of these two, justice and love, that constitutes the spirit that should control us in our exposition and criticism of these movements. We may describe it by the term *appreciation*,—the noblest word in the vocabulary of the human soul and descriptive of that modern virtue toward the practice of which the race has been slowly climbing.

Time was, when, in Christian civilization, persecution seemed ethically warranted, when those in ecclesiastical authority, assuming that *they only* had the true religion, believed it was God's will that they should suppress dissenters and so vindicate and spread "God's truth." If persuasion failed, they resorted to imprisonment. When that proved ineffectual, they tried the lash. As a final measure they condemned the dissenters to the stake, hoping by fire to exterminate both heresy and heretics. Nor are the traces of such persecution entirely extinct. To-day the Christian persecutes the Jew and the Jew the Christian. Romanism



persecutes Protestantism, Orthodox Protestantism persecutes liberal Christianity, and liberal Christianity persecutes the religion that is no longer Christian.

A step upward in the direction of the new ideal was taken when *forbearance* replaced persecution, when latitude was admitted in theology no less than in geography, when dissenters were reluctantly allowed to hold their heresies without fear of molestation or threat. And when *tolerance* was substituted for forbearance, it meant a new attitude toward dissenters, because tolerance is the *willing* (not the reluctant) consent to let others hold opinions different from our own. Yet even this attitude, noble as it seems, cannot be regarded as the acme of spiritual attainment. For, tolerance always implies a measure of concession. We tolerate what we must, but would suppress if we could. Tolerance has an air of patronizing condescension about it. He who tolerates affects a certain offensive superiority, exhibits a spiritual conceit. Yet in the estimation of many a thoughtful person tolerance is looked upon as the acme of spiritual attainment, the *ne plus ultra* of considerateness, the very loveliest

flower on the rosebush of liberalism. What more, it is asked, can there be expected of us than a friendly, tolerant attitude to beliefs and systems with which we are not in sympathy? Our answer is you can *appreciate* them, be sincerely eager to do full justice to them, generously assume that they have something of worth which may enrich your own thought on life, all the while remembering that if the belief or system contain errors, it is kept alive only by reason of the truth-germ which it hides. Lovelier by far than tolerance is appreciation which, while wholly free from the blemish that mars the beauty of tolerance, adds to that beauty fresh graces all its own. Certain it is that we have always something to learn until we have traced beliefs we disown back to their source and discovered what good and useful end they still serve for those who still hold them. In short, appreciation is the spirit which exceeds tolerance, despises mere forbearance, blushes at persecution. Toward the various religious systems of the world it takes a sympathetic attitude, seeking to estimate each from the dynamic rather than from the static viewpoint; judging each, not only by what it originally was, but also by what it has

grown to be. Appreciation is the spirit which turns to the founders of the great historic religions not with a polemical but with an eclectic purpose, asking of each: What have you to offer? What can we borrow from your gospel to enlarge and deepen our modern life? Instead of singling out Moses or Jesus as though he alone had all the truth the world needs, appreciation bows reverently before all religious teachers, esteeming each according to the truth he has to teach and the inspiration that may be drawn from the story of his life.

Similarly toward present-day psychic movements the spirit of appreciation exhibits a corresponding regard, granting to each a respectful hearing, persuaded that its thesis has some measure of truth and the more unpromising its appearance the more diligent the search for it. Appreciation aims to state the position and claims of each movement as fairly and as strongly as would a representative of it, avoiding both understatement and exaggeration together with everything that savors of disparagement or contempt. The spirit of appreciation, moreover, is one that patiently strives to determine what life-giving elements these movements contain, what needs they satisfy,

what wants they supply, modestly aware of the vast firmament of thought under which we move and watchful for every new star the guiding heavens may reveal. The spirit of appreciation looks upon these various movements not as rivals, waging a competitive sectarian warfare, but instead, likens them to the stops and pedals of a vast organ, some stressing the noble, others the tender tones, none of itself yielding the full-orbed music, but the harmonious blending of their individual qualities producing a symphony of reverence for the good, the beautiful and the true.

In the New Testament epistle to the Ephesians, written to the Christian converts at Ephesus, the writer makes use of a noble phrase which succinctly expresses the spirit I am striving to define. Realizing the danger that these newly-made converts would be prone to speak disdainfully of the old Roman religion they had just relinquished, the writer besought them to abstain "from all malice and wrath and anger, *speaking the truth in love.*" In the last five words of this earnest appeal the apostle sums up the spirit of appreciation as applied to exposition and criticism of beliefs with which we are not in accord. How often

has it happened that people, armed with logic and facts, with rhetoric and a rich vocabulary have yet carried no conviction, corrected no error, because they spoke not the truth in love. The only way to abolish superstition is by absorbing and assimilating the truth that perpetuates it. The true way to suppress quackery, whether in medicine or in religion, is by doing in a scientific way what the quacks do after the manner of the charlatan and leave vituperation, ridicule, opprobrious epithets and wrathful words severely alone.

Let us frankly confess, that very few, if any of us, have succeeded in bringing the *whole* of our mental life under cultivation. Only a part of it gets completely rationalized and ethicized. The truth is our mental life is much like one of those clearings I used to see in forests of the far west, the work of pioneer settlers. After the conifers have been cut down, the stumps and underbrush removed from an acre or two it is forthwith brought under cultivation with all the promise and potency of an earthly paradise. But it is only a clearing in the wild. Around it on every side is the forest, inhabited by formidable beasts and birds of prey. So is it with

the human mind. Very rarely is the whole of it brought under cultivation. A little section gets redeemed from superstition and dogmatism and traditionalisms that lie about the cleared area of the mental forest. But our business is to enlarge the clearing, to remove more and more of the stumps of prejudice and the underbrush of bigotry that interfere with the formation of just judgments of persons, beliefs and organizations with which we are not in sympathy.

Strange and unnatural as it may seem, we yet meet at this late day, with clergymen and statesmen who perpetuate the unwarranted practice of heaping opprobrious epithets upon the name of Thomas Paine. Do these gentlemen imagine they are furthering their particular religious or political interests by vilifying one whom they hate? Think of the noble causes to which the sincere, public-spirited, patriotic Paine gave the power of his pen and voice. I am no disciple of his. I dissent from most of the views he entertained of the Bible and of religion, but I cannot forget that it was out of the heart of Thomas Paine that the American doctrine of independence was born; that it was he who first used



the phrase "United States"; he who first insisted that they must be independent and he who led all his contemporaries in the practice of that international-mindedness which we evaluate to-day as never before.

When a great liberal thinker with bold iconoclasm tears down the walls of superstition which mediævalism had reared, he takes a brave part in the gigantic task of leading the faith of the past on to the faith of the future. But alas, if through unscholarly utterances, unwarranted ridicule and misplaced wit, he create a vast deal of harm which it will require years of calm, temperate, kindly utterance of the truth to repair! A raw rationalism that speaks with flippant and irreverent tongue never yet won its way to human hearts, whereas a ripe rationalism, born of scholarship and reverent regard for the fact of evolution, never fails to produce a wholesome effect and to promote the cause of truth.

A friend has just sent me a book entitled "The Religio-Medical Masquerade," written by a Boston lawyer.

"Christian Science," he said, in his opening sentences, "is the most shallow and sordid and wicked imposture of the ages. Upon a

substratum of lies a foundation of false pretense has been laid. Never before has the world witnessed a masquerade like that of Christian Science. The founder of this pretended religion, this bogus healing-system, has throughout her whole long life, been in every particular precisely antithetical to Christ."

Obviously in these heated terms the author describes, not Christian Science, but his own irritation, impotence and unworthiness. The temptation to indulge in vituperative epithets is very strong and subtle, but it is always a positive detriment to the progress of truth and to the moral development of him who yields to it. For, not only does this practice develop in him the evil qualities conveyed in his invectives, but it also reduces his capacity for dispassionate judgment, besides making him increasingly unsympathetic, uncharitable and unlovely. Vituperation is like the boomerang which returns upon its projector. Believing this profoundly and intensely and having sought for years to profit from it, permit me now to say that if, in succeeding chapters, any criticism of mine on any of these psychic movements be construed as manifesting an unkindly

or a contemptuous spirit, it will be misconstrued; and it will be in regretted contradiction of my purpose if I let slip a single careless word that shall wound the reverence of even the most sensitive soul.

## II

### THE NEW THOUGHT: ITS ORIGIN AND CLAIMS

(With incidental reference to "Christian Science" and  
kindred cults.)

It is not an uncommon thing in our day to see good men and women who have lost their physical or their spiritual bearings feeling about for some trustworthy guide, reaching out for anything that may prove to be for the good of their body or their soul. Consequently it would be both unwarranted and unkind to speak slightly or contemptuously of a movement which has ministered in just such helpful ways to unnumbered thousands of diseased and dis-eased people.

Wherever you find a religion acting beneficently upon the conduct of its adherents, there you may be satisfied some truth is to be found. Similarly, wherever you find a large number of adherents to a given belief, there also, you may be assured, something good and true obtains.

And so I would deal temperately and dispassionately with this Movement, treating it neither with flippancy nor ridicule, regarding it neither as a delusion nor as a fraud, recognizing its actual cures as readily as those wrought at the shrine of Ste. Anne, in Beaupré, and often by a like cause. That thousands of cripples come with crutches and depart without them is not to be denied, though the abandoned crutches be no evidence that a bone of St. Anne made lame people walk. Rather do these crutches show how many people there were who had them longer than they needed them and that they discovered there how much less dependent on them they were than they supposed. At the shrine they got just the bit of confidence and trust they needed, persuading them they could walk without crutches. A stirring impulse, a confidence that St. Anne will not let them fall, gave them courage and will to discard the crutches and walk without them. The cure was not a miracle, but a discovery; an exhibition, not of what St. Anne does, but of what they who go there do. As the local priest, in charge, said -- "it is their faith."

Say what we will in criticism of the New

Thought movement, we have to admit that a very large number of people, possibly a million, are influenced by it. They constitute a psychic type to be studied with respect, since for them the movement continues to fulfill a helpful mission, physically, morally, spiritually.

Glance with me, for a moment, at some of its more important achievements on each of these three planes.

Thousands of people there are who have suffered from one or another ailment, real or imaginary, and who, through the treatment peculiar to this movement, have become conscious of good health and freedom from pain. Explain it in any way you wish, enough has been done, on the physical plane, by the healing method peculiar to this movement to prohibit our branding it as a humbug or a fad. True, a large number of failures have been reported, but this only adds to the strength of the argument, because there must have been a goodly number of successes to offset the failures, otherwise the movement would have come to an inglorious finish long ago. In so far, then, as New Thought treatment has brought health to hosts of people who have failed to



secure it by any other means, we must acknowledge that the movement is an incalculable boon.

But healing the sick is not the whole of New Thought, any more than it is of Christian Science.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, the representatives of both these movements are quick and keen to insist that healing the sick is the smallest part, the least significant side of their cult. In confirmation of this conviction they point to thousands of homes in which the conversation never turns on bad weather or bad health; homes in which it is bad form to talk about bad weather or disagreeable sensations; homes from which all worry and dread, all morbidity and pessimism have been banished. Nay more, bad habits, unconquered by other means, have by this system been vanquished, sour dispositions have been sweetened and hot tempers cooled; snobbishness has been replaced by graciousness and where once men and women fed on the garbage of gossip they now feast upon the fruits of the spirit. For foolish, fashionable dissipations there has been substituted serious, sensible interest in things eminently worth while.

<sup>1</sup> See "Rudimentary Divine Science," by Mrs. M. B. Eddy, p. 9.

No less impressive is the achievement of this movement on the spiritual plane, for it has made the idea of God a practical reality where formerly it was only a theological belief unrelated to daily life. This movement has stressed the idea of the immanence of God as an indwelling, quickening power, bringing calm, serenity and poise into natures that were once nervous, fretful and unbalanced. And if you would know how these results on the spiritual plane have been achieved, let me commend the last fifty pages of the latest book on the subject, written by one of the ablest representatives of the movement, Mr. Horatio W. Dresser, and entitled, "Handbook of the New Thought." Here are concrete, practical suggestions intended to make the thought of God a vital reality to the reader, to enable him to "practice His Presence."<sup>2</sup>

From what has been thus far said, it must be clear that the New Thought movement is not only a method of healing disease but also a spiritual philosophy of life. At the start it was solely therapeutic; it began as a mental healing movement and only after its ethical and religious implications had been perceived was

<sup>2</sup> "Handbook of the New Thought," p. 261.

the name "New Thought" substituted for Mental Healing as a broader, more comprehensive designation. We can trace the movement back to the middle of the last century when one Phineas Parkhurst Quimby undertook investigation of certain mesmeric or hypnotic phenomena, which were being exhibited in his native city of Belfast, Maine. Having discovered that he could experiment successfully with hypnotism he conceived the idea of applying it to the cure of disease. For the man had suffered for years from a seemingly incurable disease and believed himself likely to die at any time. Consequently he was ready to entertain any proposition that promised success where the regular medical practice had failed. Experiments made with a few sensitives soon proved to Quimby that hypnotism could be successfully applied to the cure of disease. But, realizing one day that suggestion is the essence of hypnotism, he thought to dispense with the hypnosis, or sleep, into which the patient had been put and treat him in his waking state instead. Thus the transition was effected, for Quimby, from Hypnotism to Mental Healing; from the method of treating the patient in a sleeping state and in that hypnosis bidding him

yield his will to the will of the practitioner, to the method of treating the patient in his waking state and therein encouraging him to exercise his own will in carrying out the suggestion the practitioner had made to him.

Quimby's healing method was briefly as follows: — Starting with the idea that all disease is a form of error, due partly to inherited ideas about the physical origin of disease, and in part to popular notions concerning symptoms of disease, Quimby sought to give the patient "the truth" about himself, a new mental picture, indeed, that should take the place of his inherited conceptions. "God," he said, "beholds the patient sound, sane, whole, free." Inoculate the patient's mind with this conception of his true selfhood, for there is healing power in it. A New York representative of Quimby's therapeutics recently recommended the following *modus operandi*: — "Addressing the patient let the healer say: — 'You were created in the image and likeness of God. He endowed you with dominion and power. There is nothing to fear; you are in no danger. As light excludes all darkness, so truth excludes all error. God loves you with an infi-

nite love. He is your Father, and cares for you with an infinite tenderness. Have no fears or doubts; realize your oneness with the Source of your being. This body is not you; you are a spiritual being, endowed with life, love, and truth. If God be for you, nothing can be against you. Put your trust in Him who alone is able to save to the uttermost. If He be for you, what can be against you? He alone is omnipotent and omnipresent. He alone gives strength and health and life to all. He is your life and your strength; in Him you live, and move, and have your being. There is nothing to fear. The spirit of the Lord hath formed you, the breath of the Lord hath given you life and the so-called powers of darkness cannot prevail against you. His love, which passeth understanding, is resting and abiding with you, and will rest and abide with you now and evermore.' ”

Another practitioner of New Thought, enlarging upon the foregoing, bids the patient: — “recollect there can be no disease where there is no life; and, where there is life, there is the healing power. Pay no further attention, then, to the disease, or pain, or the fear of them, but focalize your thought upon that

healing life as now active in the affected parts and image them as even now becoming sound and perfect after the divine ideal. Hold to that resolutely, with boundless trust and lively hope in Almighty Goodness and, 'according to your faith be it unto you.' "

Applying these principles in his own case, Quimby was cured of his disease. Among the hundreds who came to his office for treatment was a woman destined to be world-renowned as the foundress of Christian Science. Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy was one of the early patients of Dr. Quimby, and over her signature testified to the efficacy of "mental healing," in her own case, albeit that later she repudiated Quimby's teaching and set up "Christian Science" instead.<sup>3</sup>

Having successfully experimented with "mental healing," Quimby established what he called "a science of health" in that he knew *how* the cures were effected and that he could *explain* the curative principle to others. Quimby, however, took no credit to himself as a mental healer. On the contrary, he held that God is the only healer, that "true causality, of whatever kind, is ultimately Divine,"

<sup>3</sup> See "Science and Health," p. x (1917 edition).



and that his own mind was merely an instrument or agent through which the divine power did its beneficent work. Nevertheless, to Quimby belongs the credit of having been the first in the modern world to apply the "mental" method to the cure and prevention of disease.

After his death in 1866, the movement spread far beyond the confines of Maine, and soon took on the form of a religious cult, because behind the process of mental healing were definite religious ideas — of God and God's healing power and man as made in the image of God. In 1886 a church was established in Boston, active propaganda was instituted, magazines were published, "metaphysical" clubs were organized, New Thought "centers" and "circles" were formed, a national convention was held, attended by a goodly number of New Thought groups. By the year 1900 it had reached the stage where the demand for its literature was sufficiently great for "insincere stuff, mechanically produced for the market," to be to a certain extent supplied by publishers — "a phenomenon," said Professor Wm. James, "never observed until a religion has got well past its earliest insecure begin-

nings.”<sup>4</sup> In Boston the movement was then represented chiefly by the three Dressers, father, mother and son (Horatio W.), Charles Newcomb, W. J. Winkley, Henry Wood, Ralph Waldo Trine. In Chicago the movement had a remarkably brilliant and competent representative in Mrs. Ursula N. Gestefeld. Still further West, Helen Wilmans served as an able exponent of it, while here, in New York, the movement had for its foremost speakers, Charles Brodie Patterson and W. J. Colville. To-day, in this city there are nine “New Thought” organizations which announce in the Saturday press their Sunday services. One is entitled “Advance Science”; another, “The Church of Silent Demand”; a third, “The Fellowship of the Life More Abundant”; a fourth, “The League for the Larger Life”; a fifth group meets with Mrs. Chapin at the “Biltmore”; a sixth holds its meetings with Edith Rarick at the “Park Avenue Hotel”; a seventh is called “The School of the Builders”; while the last two are known as “The Society for Constructive Thought,” and “Unity Society.”

With the spread of the movement came in-

<sup>4</sup> “Varieties of Religious Experience,” Lect. iv.

evitable modifications of Quimby's original views. He, for example, had held that his own thought was only an instrument of Divine Mind, but certain of his followers, notably Henry Wood, regarded thought as "the greatest power in the world, creative and formative." Again, Quimby saw the cause of disease in other factors besides erroneous thoughts, *i. e.* in emotions, nervous states and bodily conditions, but many of his followers believed that wrong thought constituted the sole and sufficing cause. Quimby regarded God as the only real healer, but there were those who held that man's own thought has healing power in it, just "holding the thought" of health being often sufficient to induce it. But without dwelling at greater length upon these modifications suffice it to note that because of them the New Thought movement is now known by many different names, such as Mental Science, Divine Science, Practical Metaphysics, Spiritual Science. Moreover, because of these modifications the movement has no one oracle, no one text book, no uniformity of scope or content. Then, too, because of these modifications, which are still multiplying, there exists no single book in the literature of the move-

ment giving both an adequate and a complete statement of what it stands for. Yet despite all their differences they who represent the New Thought Movement hold much in common. They all agree on certain therapeutic, ethical and religious beliefs.

Common to all forms of New Thought on the therapeutic side are the following beliefs: — (a) that disease is a form of error, (b) that the cure is effected by giving the patient a picture of his true self as made in the divine image, (c) that God is omnipotent, equal to curing organic as well as functional disorders, and (d) that man has in himself power to draw upon the Divine reservoir for health.

On the ethico-religious side of the movement, all representatives are agreed (a) that God is infinite Wisdom and Infinite Love, (b) that man *is* a soul and *has* a body, (c) that each human being is “an infinitesimal component of the Infinite God,” (d) that every human being is master of his own destiny, to be worked out through the discipline of adversity, in one or another of its countless forms, (e) that sin on any plane is subject to the law of retribution, and that a sin on one plane cannot escape punishment because of obedi-

ence to law on another plane. No matter how fine a moral character you may have, if you commit a sin on the physical plane you suffer for it notwithstanding — a law pathetically illustrated in the case of Milton, who read the Bible every night by a dim candle-light, and eventually became blind. The fact that he was reading the Bible could not save his eyes from being subject to the law of retribution on the physical plane where a condition of preserving his sight had been violated. But let me not leave this characterization of the unity of the New Thought movement without confirming what has been set forth as common to all its types by quotations from the works of leading representatives and organizations:

“Love is the eternal sunshine of life, and to one living in that sunshine there can be no darkness. Law controls all planes of life.”

“To obey all laws is to live the complete life.”

“To think no evil is simply to have no ownership of it.”

“In proportion as a man opens himself to the divine influx he takes on the God-powers.”

“The art of living is the art of thinking,

for life has no values except as thought molds them. . . . Right thought means right living. Thoughts are forces. God is all; and, if all, then each individual, you and I, must be a vital part of that all, since there can be nothing separate from it. And if a part, then the same in nature, in characteristics, the same as a tumbler of water taken from the ocean is, in nature, in qualities, in characteristics, identical with the ocean, its source." As indicative of the radiant, unlimited optimism everywhere manifest in the movement, the following quotations will serve:

"Only the good exists, all seeming wrong being but the means to an end higher than itself. All things work together for good whether we call them by the name of good or evil. The world is a garden of delights to those who are not blind and deaf. True life is unalterable sweetness in which all the shadows of our yesterdays are woven into the soft tints of the morning sunshine."

In a bulletin of the International New Thought Alliance (just published),<sup>5</sup> appear the following sentences written by its president, James A. Edgerton. "Spanning the

<sup>5</sup> January, 1918.



world is a rainbow above the receding deluge of war. It is the promise that never again shall its inundating flood touch the earth. The horror of the great war is nearing its end. Henceforth, the world is to belong all to God, all to construction, all to health, all to truth, all to freedom. The principles of liberty are hereafter to predominate in all nations. Henceforth there is to be a more cordial, a more genuine, and a more poetic relation between man and man, and between man and woman the world around. The old limitations of geography, of class, of race, of so-called religion, of the imaginary ills of the flesh, and all the progeny of error have gone into the discard. Man has awakened from an evil dream. This is the message of the New Thought in the new time."

In the "Declaration of Principles" adopted by the International New Thought Alliance at the St. Louis convention in 1917 we find the following compendium of the therapeutic and ethico-religious beliefs in which all members are agreed.

"We affirm the freedom of each soul. Each individual must be loyal to the Truth he sees.

"We affirm the Good. This is supreme,

universal and everlasting. Man is made in the image of the Good, and evil and pain are but the tests and correctives that appear when his thought does not reflect the full glory of this image.

“We affirm health, which is man’s divine inheritance. Man’s body is his holy temple.

“We affirm the divine supply.

“We affirm the new thought of God as Universal Love, Life, Truth and Joy; that His mind is our mind now, that realizing our oneness with Him means love, truth, peace, health and plenty, not only in our own lives, but in the giving out of these fruits of the Spirit to others.

“We affirm these things, not as a profession, but practice; not on one day of the week, but in every hour and minute of every day; not in the ministry of a few, but in a service that includes the democracy of all; not in words alone, but in the innermost thoughts of the heart expressed in living the life.

“We affirm Heaven here and now, the life everlasting that becomes conscious immortality, the communion of mind with mind throughout the universe of thought, and the quickened realization of the indwelling God in

each soul that is making a new heaven and a new earth."

But in this ethico-religious teaching there is nothing really new. Emerson and Quimby were both born in 1803, yet twenty-eight years before Quimby had worked out these ethico-religious ideas Emerson had already expressed them in his essay on "Nature" published in 1832, amplifying them in his "Divinity School" address, in 1838. Here it is that we read: "Yourself a newborn bard of the Holy Ghost, cast behind you all conformity, and acquaint men at first hand with Deity. Look to it first and only that tradition, custom, authority, are nothing to you, are not bandages over your eyes, so that you cannot see, but live with the privilege of the immeasurable mind. . . . Let me admonish you first of all to go alone, to refuse good models, even those that are sacred in the imagination of men; dare to love God without mediator and without veil. Friends enough you shall find who will hold up to your emulation Wesleys and Oberlins, saints and prophets. Thank God for these good men, but say: 'I also am a man.'" With Emerson the New Thought takes the affirmative, constructive, optimistic attitude,

affirming success even amid failure, believing devoutly in the supremacy of the good, the triumph of ideals, self-reliance, and the development of individuality.

Twenty years before Quimby's death, *i. e.* in 1846, Emerson had published all three of those volumes of Essays in which every salient ethico-religious idea that is characteristic of the New Thought may be found. It was, then, no mere joke which a recent reviewer of the most popular of all New Thought books perpetrated when he described "In Tune with the Infinite," written by Ralph Waldo Trine, as "two-thirds Emerson and one-third Trine."

If, on its therapeutic or healing side, the movement may be traced to Quimby, on its ethico-religious side it harks back chiefly to Emerson, the author more frequently quoted in its literature than any other. Nay, more, it would not be unjust to say that many a book on the New Thought shows little else than a simplification of the more difficult and recondite thought we meet with in the works of Emerson. And this is frankly admitted by many New Thought writers. Says one of these, in a little brochure, just published,

“New Thought is a more satisfying and more practical revelation of that which is eternally old. New Thought uses the inspired truths of all the ages including those of the present. It does not claim to be a new philosophy, but it claims to bring a clearer understanding of the Divine Truths of God revealed through His children. New Thought is really old thought, but becomes new to the individual through making Truth applicable to the daily living.”<sup>6</sup>

Nor is this type of originality to be despised. Absolute originality is a mere abstraction. The man who should venture to express an absolutely original idea would become dry as Sahara, more laconic than the Spartans, and dumb as the Egyptian Sphinx. But there are species of relative originality and one of these is manifested by New Thought writers. For, just as it is the transcendent merit of the tree that it draws from the surrounding earth, air and water, the materials wherewith to build the strength of its trunk and the beauty of its foliage, so it is the transcendent merit of these authors that they drew from the surrounding literature of Emerson and Plato, Berke-

<sup>6</sup> M. L. S. Butterworth: “What is New Thought.”

ley, the Vedanta and the Fourth Gospel, materials wherewith to construct their inspiring gospel of health, hope, freedom and joy.

If this movement be called "new," then it can be only as it has carried Emerson's thought *beyond* the limits which he intended — translating it into terms of healing. The New Thought is new as a reaction from that limited, or narrow medical science of sixty years ago which ignored the mental factor in the cause and cure of disease. It is new as a protest against that philosophical materialism which sixty years ago endeavored to prove that the total world, including even the finest products of our spiritual nature, can be adequately interpreted in terms of matter and motion. In its post-Quimby development the New Thought marks a reaction from the so-called "autocracy and dogmatism" of Christian Science and, in so far as it has worked out a Biblical science of health, differing from that presented by Mrs. Eddy in her "Science and Health," the movement may be regarded as new. Quimby, indeed, was the first to educe such a science of health from the Bible, Mrs. Eddy following in the wake of his exegesis, with a "Key to the



Scriptures" of her own. As for these attempts at deriving a system of therapeutics from the Bible, let it be understood that while all are free to interpret the Bible in any way they choose, yet it is incumbent upon them to note carefully what the Bible writers intended to teach as distinguished from such other interpretations as may be put upon their words. Good doctrinal matter, even a "Science of Health," can be extracted from the Bible, but this is not to be ascribed to the intention of the authors. No one can object to the proper name *Adam* being divided into two syllables so that it reads "*a dam*," or obstruction, as Mrs. Eddy advocates in her "Science and Health" (p. 338). Nor again is there any harm in making the name of the Bible river *Gihon* signify "woman's rights," as we read on page 587 of this same book. But to describe such interpretation as "the original meaning" as Mrs. Eddy did on page 579 and as New Thoughters, like Mrs. Geste-feld, did, is to violate the ethics of interpretation.

Let there be liberty for all in the matter of interpretation, but in heaven's name, let there be also reason and conscience to see things as

they really are and not make the Bible writers responsible for ideas foreign to their thought, their age and their purpose.

Perhaps we shall be helped to a fuller understanding of this movement if we contrast it, briefly, with four kindred movements.

And in so doing, let it be distinctly understood that my aim here is not criticism but clarification, not to pass sentence upon these four but, by contrasting the New Thought with them, to set the features of the former into bolder relief.

I. *Hypnotism* involves a form of sleep in which the patient's natural susceptibility to suggestion is increased and this may hold over after the hypnosis has passed away. Thus the will of the patient yields to that of the practitioner.

*The New Thought* movement abjures hypnosis and a crippled will. It treats the patient in his waking state and encourages him to strengthen his own will rather than surrender it to the will of the healer. According to New Thought doctrine it is not safe to surrender one's own will to that of another, even to escape a pain or a sorrow.

II. *The Emmanuel Movement*, so called be-

cause it originated in Emmanuel Church, Boston, represents a healing ministry first undertaken by that Episcopal Church. It does not represent a revival of the healing ministry of the early Christian Church because incident to that ministry was the belief in Satan and his demons as the cause of disease. All sickness was attributed to demoniacal possession and special officials called "exorcists" were appointed healers by virtue of their alleged power over the demons. No, the Emmanuel Movement takes its stand on modern scientific medicine. It conducts a clinic in which each case is scientifically diagnosed by an expert physician. No organic diseases are treated in the Emmanuel clinic; its treatments are confined to functional disorders alone. Thus the Emmanuel Movement is a term signifying a scheme for medical and clerical alliance, for psycho-therapeutic treatment of nervous and functional disorders.

*The New Thought* is not dependent on medical diagnosis nor does it acknowledge any distinction between organic and functional diseases but regards both as susceptible to mental treatment.

III. *Psychotherapy* is a recognized branch

of the science of medicine. It is not allied with the New Thought or with any psychic movement whatsoever. The term is neutral and the movement free from "entangling alliances." Its immediate task is the training of the mind, the emotions and the muscles by strictly scientific methods alone.

IV. *Christian Science* is a highly organized institution homogeneous and unified in doctrine, practice and government.

*The New Thought Movement* is an unorganized aggregation of independent, heterogeneous groups, only partially unified in doctrine and practice.

*Christian Science* acknowledges the leadership of Mrs. Eddy and the text book, "Science and Health," as the ultimate criterion of truth on all questions of faith and practice.

*The New Thought Movement* centers authority in no person, neither in Quimby nor in Emerson, but only in the revelations of intuition and the discoveries of experience.

*Christian Science* looks for healing-truth in the Bible and in "Science and Health," since Mrs. Eddy declared, that "all outside Christian Science is error" ("mutable" in the 1917 edition; p. 202).

*The New Thought Movement* welcomes truth from every source, holding that the word of God cannot be limited to any book or any age.

*Christian Science* denies the existence of disease, as we read on p. 374, line 10; p. 395, line 21, and elsewhere in "Science and Health."<sup>7</sup>

*The New Thought Movement* acknowledges the existence of disease *while treating it as the product of error.*

*Christian Science* denies the reality of matter; as we read on p. 368, line 27; pp. 269-70 and elsewhere in "Science and Health."

*The New Thought Movement* insists that matter is a palpable fact but that the body, as matter, is to be governed by the spirit. In the language of a leading representative of the New Thought:—"We regard the notion that the body, sin, and sickness are unreal, as a baseless dogma, the product of a confused metaphysic. For us the body is a reality, not indeed to be compared as a reality with the soul of the Absolute, but still in a genuine, however limited sense, *real.*"

<sup>7</sup> All quotations from "Science and Health" are taken from the 1917 edition.

Considered on its ethico-religious side, it must be said that this movement holds itself rather aloof from the practical philanthropies and social service. Very rarely do you meet a New Thought representative among the social workers in settlements or in neighborhood guilds. Said the President of the National New Thought Alliance in St. Louis last month (March, 1918), "New Thought is the opposite pole of Sociology." I should have considered that statement unfair had any one else made it, but it comes from the presiding officer at a national convention. The statement was received without protest, or even comment; and, alas! it is too true. Because of its exclusive devotion to "spiritual science," it has tended to take an attitude of unconcern toward all physiological and environmental obstacles that militate against moral health and social health,—such, for example, as the "Prophylaxis Society" deals with in its fight against the social evil or such as one sees in those tenement houses where people of different ages and different sexes are huddled together in a single room, or, again, the overworked bodies of men and women in factories where monotonous machine work superinduces



nervous irritation and this, in turn, indulgence in intoxicating drink, not to mention loss of power to develop individuality. Surely some effort should be put forth to improve these hindering conditions rather than to rely exclusively on New Thought teaching, however excellent it be. Well enough, to insist upon "the power of man to draw upon the Divine reservoir," but alas that this should carry in its train indifference toward these terrible hindrances that ought to be removed from the path of decent living in which the New Thought would have their handicapped fellow beings walk.

On its therapeutic or healing side, also, the New Thought has taken certain positions that expose it to inevitable criticism. Thus, for instance, it affirms the power of mind over the body, but it refuses to admit the opposite truth. The former statement is universally accepted, it stands unquestioned. But it is equally true that the body has power over the mind. Experience has taught us that when we become physically fatigued we find it exceedingly difficult to read and still more difficult to carry on a process of consecutive, logical thinking. Ordinary fatigue sometimes induces mental

disorders that baffle the neurologist. Organs with which the gynæcologist is concerned, react, when disordered, to the serious detriment of mental power. Other physical conditions there are which superinduce delirium, while certain disturbances of brain-plasm bring on, in some cases, insanity; in others, complete loss of consciousness.

The human organism is a "transformer" of energy, whether of the body or of the mind. Chemical and physiological processes go on in us and influence our spiritual health, witness the case of the preacher who lost his pulpit because of inebriety, relapses following every effort at reform, his long indulgence having damaged nervous structures whose function is bound up with will-power. There is in truth a physiology of the moral and the spiritual life, too often ignored by devotees of the New Thought. If, then, on the one hand it be admitted that the mind has power over the body, it must be also admitted that the body has power over the mind.

A second affirmation to which exception must be taken is that "the mind is practically omnipotent in its mastery over bodily conditions." Listen to these utterances of a promi-

ment New York representative of the New Thought movement, Charles B. Patterson: "There is no ailment that mind cannot remove. If mentally we digest thoroughly we will have no physical indigestion. Bright-minded people are never bilious." Twenty years ago I heard Mrs. Julius Dresser, the mother of Horatio, say, at a public meeting, that "through the power of thought even nails may be digested and poisons swallowed with impunity." And Miss Helen Wilmans, in an address delivered at San Francisco, made the supreme claim for the power of thought, saying that death itself can be defied by it.

For Christian Science parallels to these astounding utterances we have the claims made by Mrs. Eddy in her "Science and Health." Thus, for example, she said: "If you or I should appear to die, we should not be dead. The seeming decease (is) caused by a majority of human belief that men must die.<sup>8</sup> If a dose of poison is swallowed by mistake and the patient dies, human belief causes the death. In such cases a few persons believe the poison harmless but the vast majority believe the arsenic (or whatever the drug) to be poi-

<sup>8</sup> "Science and Health," p. 164.

sonous. Consequently the result is controlled by the majority of opinions.<sup>9</sup>

"The Christian Scientist takes the best care of his body when he leaves it most out of his thought.<sup>10</sup> You say a boil is painful, but that is impossible. The boil simply manifests a belief in pain and the belief is called a boil."<sup>11</sup>

Such extravagant statements can be excused indeed but only as evidences of an exuberant enthusiasm that breeds credulity which is characteristic of the early stages of every movement. What better evidence could there be of limits to the power of thought over the body than the total breakdown of conspicuous representatives of the movement; prolific writers and busy healers, so busy that they could not demonstrate, in their own case, the truth of the principles for which they stood; physical wrecks transported to a sanitarium or to a "watering" place as a last resort? Remembering that his own father was one of these, and frankly recognizing the many failures that New Thought healers had scored, Horatio

<sup>9</sup> Pp. 177-178.

<sup>10</sup> P. 383.

<sup>11</sup> P. 153.

Dresser published the following appeal: "Let us apply the New Thought as far as we can in the healing of disease, but above all, let us be true to common sense, and let us be free to consult others besides the mental healer in order to add to our knowledge of Nature's processes. Our only hope is in taking strict account of both mental and physical facts." A younger contemporary of Mr. Dresser recently remarked, "Little advance has been made by our mental healers because they are blind to the obvious limits to therapeutic thought. My own mother has been laid up for six months a victim of over-specialization as a mental healer and others too, have collapsed." Commenting upon this a fellow healer, W. J. Winkley, said: "Let us be broad, as broad as we require the doctors to be. Let us gladly recognize the good, all good helps and agencies, whatever they may be, and from whatsoever quarter they may come."

Eighteen years ago a noble young woman suffering from deafness and having tried Christian Science in vain, was prevailed upon to take the New Thought treatment under a practitioner of great repute. Throughout the intervening years she had been a faithful fol-

lower of "the Truth," had lived daily in a congenial New Thought atmosphere and complied with all the requirements of the healer, yet her hearing has not improved. Many a New Thought disciple would say, "she did not hold the thought with sufficient clarity or tenacity." But to those, not partial to any psychic theory and knowing something of hospital clinics, it would seem a sufficient reason for her continued deafness that it dates from an attack of scarlet fever in childhood when an injury to the aural nerve is frequently a sequel to that disease.

Grant that physicians generally are in need of more psychological knowledge, yet as Horatio Dresser candidly confessed, "New Thought leaders no less than Christian Scientists are in need of more physiological knowledge; nay more, even their combined wisdom is insufficient to explain *all* cases adequately." Certainly, no one movement has all the truth; no one "knows it all" and it would therefore seem the part of wisdom not to close our medical schools and laboratories and leave the field of therapeutics to the mental healers alone. Physicians, it is true — and none are so ready to confess it as the best



educated — are liable to err. For, theirs is an experimental science and all shades and grades of persons are in the profession. Yet it may be said, with all fairness and in the spirit of unqualified kindness, that there is more hope for the world in one well trained, highly-skilled doctor, who sees his case from every side, than in a hundred *uneducated* mental healers or “scientists” devoid of all scientific training in the causes of disease and unwilling to concede that truth may reside elsewhere as well as in their cult.

There are many diseases over which all the various psychic modes of healing have proved powerless. Why this should be so, or that it always will be so, is something that no one as yet knows. So far as can be ascertained there are diseases, like cancer and meningitis, Bright’s disease and locomotor ataxia, incurable by mental means. To be sure, this assertion has been often questioned, but the fact still stares us in the face. Again and again has it been reported that one or another organic disease has been “cured” by New Thought, or by some kindred method. But, as in the case of the cures attributed to Jesus, we have to ask what was the *precise nature* of the disease and

was the cure *permanent*? For, recurrence of cancer and other diseases is common even after a protracted interval of seeming restoration to health. "Kidney-trouble" may have been cured indeed, but the question we must ask is, was it acute nephritis? Cases of cancer-cure may be cited, but we ask what kinds were they? Were they the "self-eliminating" or the "rapidly progressing" type? "Heart-trouble" too, may have been cured, but was it an aneurism of the aorta? So of alleged "stomach-trouble" being cured we must ask was it a case of gastric ulcer, and if of "lung-trouble" was it a case of phthisis?<sup>12</sup> Moreover, it must be remembered that there is not a single *organic* disease but Nature may simulate it when only some *functional* disorder obtains. Read the illuminating account of this mimicry of organic disease as related by the eminent English physician, Stephen Paget, or, take the testimony of a prominent Boston physician, one who, after eight years' careful study and diagnosis of over one hundred cases that had been unsuccessfully treated by Christian Scientists and mental healers. "I am

<sup>12</sup> These instances are taken from the "testimony" meetings reported in various periodicals.

satisfied," he said, "that the limitations of mental therapeutics are as follows:

"First, They are of value chiefly as curative agents in cases of functional neurosis.

"Second, In correcting vicious habits formed by the mind of the individual.

"Third, In removing some of the acute symptoms of organic disease.

"Fourth, I consider that their greatest value is in the department of preventive medicine: I believe that more disease could be prevented by studying the minds and souls of youth and by correcting abnormal tendencies in them, than can be cured in later life by any amount of treatment, no matter of what kind."

Nearly twenty years ago there appeared in the *American Journal of Psychology* a most illuminating article contributed by Henry H. Goddard, Ph.D., a Fellow of Clark University, Worcester, Mass., in which he presented the results of prolonged study of what he called "faith-cures." He used this term to include Dowieism, Schlatterism, Quimbyism, Christian Science and other allied non-medical modes of healing. Dr. Goddard's investigations were conducted with admirable candor

and open-mindedness and for the sole purpose of discovering the truth regarding the nature and achievements of these "cures." No unprejudiced reader of this record can fail to see how utterly unwarranted is the notion that any one of these "cures" is superior to all the rest. The results of Dr. Goddard's investigations may be summarized as follows:—

1. They all cure disease and sin, and all alike have scored failures.

2. All have cured the same kinds of disease and for all alike certain cases have proved incurable.

3. The records show that patients went from one "school" to another and that no one school shows marked success (in treatment) over the other schools.

4. Many persons remained uncured though all the schools had been patronized.

5. Some failed to be cured by Dowieism but succeeded under Christian Science; some failed with Christian Science but succeeded under Schlatterism; some failed with Christian Science but succeeded under Hypnotism; some failed with both, but succeeded under the New Thought.

6. There is only one factor common to all

the schools, *viz.*, suggestion. Nor is Christian Science an exception, witness the testimony of Mrs. Eddy in her "Science and Health," p. 411, line 27.

7. Each "school" sees in Jesus a representative of its healing method and claims him as its sponsor.

I come now to a third just charge to which the New Thought has exposed itself. By its complete rejection of medical science it has cast a slur upon it, leaving no room whatever for its ministrations. It sets at naught all the medical knowledge that has been accumulated from the days of Hippocrates down to our own; it ignores all the wonderful anæsthetics which medical research has brought to the relief of suffering man. It disdains the use of those marvelous discoveries — disinfectants, sera, antitoxins made by Pasteur and his illustrious successors — men who have wrested from scourge and plague the secret of their decimating power, not halting at self-martyrdom, as in the case of Drs. Laazear and Carroll who gave their lives to prove that yellow fever is caused by the malarial mosquito which scatters the deadly germs, men who have reduced mortality statistics to such a de-

gree that to-day children have 96 chances for life in cases where formerly they had only four.

Some one remarks, "How cruel these people are!" Nay, they are tender-hearted and kind to a degree. Some one else exclaims: "How ignorant these people are!" Nay, they are finely educated, indeed some of us might rejoice greatly had we the culture that I have seen in some representatives of the New Thought and of Christian Science. What are they, then? They are simply extremists, people who in their reaction from that limited medical science of sixty years ago, which disregarded the power of mind, have gone over to the opposite extreme, contending that mental power or Divine power, as the case may be, is practically omnipotent. Because of this extremist position it has been proposed to "legislate New Thought out of existence," even as it has been repeatedly proposed thus to annihilate Christian Science. Just how far legislation is needed to curb these psychic movements appears when we ask: what is the object of law? It is to protect society and hitherto society has not stood in need of protection from these systems, any more than



from quacks. We do need a law requiring all practitioners of whatever school to give satisfactory evidence that they have knowledge of the sciences of chemistry, physiology and anatomy. We have a law requiring vaccination and the reporting of all cases of contagious diseases to the medical authorities; and with this law these movements have complied. When statistics shall be produced proving that people are suffering and dying from the treatment furnished by "irregulars" it will be time enough to enact a law prohibiting their practice and every sensible person would raise voice and hand against them. Till then we must regard every attempt to legislate them out of existence as un-American procedure, as an unwarranted attack on the personal liberty of people who have a right to choose any kind of therapeutics they desire, provided they do not imperil other lives.

It is fairly well settled that rats carry the infection of the bubonic plague from house to house and that mosquitos carry the germs of malaria and of yellow fever and deposit them where they will do positive and perhaps fatal harm to human bodies. Acquired knowledge in these fields has already resulted in reducing

to a great degree the death-rate in affected regions. Contagion of disease is also fairly well settled and while every one should be allowed to risk or guard his life as he likes, no man or woman has a right to play upon human society the part of the rats and mosquitos in spreading disease. There may be differences of opinion concerning vaccination and the germ-theory of disease, but we have reached a point where it is the clear duty of all citizens to play the game of life according to these rules of health and safety. When physicians seek to crush out "irregular" therapeutists we should protest. Similarly, when Christian Scientists or New Thought adherents try to obstruct the progress of public health-measures and especially of preventive-medicine we should also protest. And precisely as marriage-ceremony laws are made, not for the sake of clergymen and justices of peace but for the good of the community, so laws against the spread of disease and its prevention are made, not for any particular school of practitioners but for the benefit of society.

If there existed an infallible school for the diagnosis and cure of disease there would then be a law forbidding any one to practice unless

a graduate of that school. But there is none such. Nay, more, seeing that irregulars of various schools have accomplished results of unquestioned benefit to sufferers, every true American will oppose anything that stands in the way of people choosing any form of practice they wish, provided society be not jeopardized.

It remains to make mention of one other criticism. Wherever the New Thought is offered as a short cut or royal road to good health — and it has often been so offered and adopted for that reason — it exhibits the same deplorable American tendency that we witness in other matters of intense human interest. We see it in those typical “Wallingfords” who went to Alaska with a passion to “get rich quick.” We see it in those Christian Scientists who joined the followers of Mrs. Eddy because, as they said, they believed they could “get health quick.” We see it in those persons who entered the ranks of the Socialist party in the pious belief that society would “get social health quick” by the adoption of Socialism. Similarly there are people who have espoused the New Thought with a corresponding expectation, seeing in it a short-cut to their

supreme desideratum. Riding recently on the Rutland railroad my eye was attracted by a signboard bearing this inscription, "Go slow round this curve." It has a pertinent application to the point we are here considering. There are dangerous curves on the track of social and therapeutic progress and it behooves the redeeming or healing engineer to run his reform locomotive with prudence and caution. You see the sufferings and deprivations of the poor and oppressed and your pity and sympathy are so stirred that you refuse to wait for a remedy or to accept one that operates slowly. And this, in truth, is the origin of all Utopias — the notion that "what *ought* to be can be realized quickly and with a minimum of effort and pain." But the real remedies never work that way. On the contrary, the more deep-seated the evil to be cured, the slower and more detailed the process of reform. And this is every whit as true of physical and spiritual diseases with which the New Thought deals. Consequently one should beware of fooling oneself with a false idealism by seizing upon a scheme or system that promises immediate or early relief when perchance the malady to be cured is one requiring patient, systematic and

even a measure of experimental treatment. Genuine idealism always goes slowly, fearlessly facing even the darkest facts and *searching out causes* with tireless patience and with deathless hope.

Incidentally it may be remarked that the death-rate as a whole has not decreased since the New Thought and Christian Science came into the world. Moreover, in the types of disease which it would seem must be peculiarly amenable to treatment by these two methods, the death-rate continues unchanged, whereas in the case of such diseases as diphtheria, malaria, yellow fever and tetanus a remarkable reduction in the death-rate has been scored due to the sera and antitoxins which the New Thought and Christian Science abjure.

Finally, it behooves us to note that since mind plays so large a part in the cure of disease and a still larger part in the prevention of it; and since there are cases that clearly fail to respond to mental treatment in any one of its varying forms, the two systems — medical science and New Thought — should not be regarded as mutually exclusive and antagonistic, but rather as complementary and inter-

dependent. And the bond between them is certain to grow stronger as the representatives of each system grow in mutual understanding and appreciation of the service which each is empowered to render mankind.



### III

#### SIR OLIVER LODGE AND OBJECTIVE EVIDENCE FOR LIFE AFTER DEATH

(With incidental reference to the views of Sir Wm. Barrett and Sir A. Conan Doyle.)

WE live at a time when more people are mourning their dead than in any other period of history. At such a time a book written by an eminent scientist and dealing with the question of man's survival of death is certain to make a wide and powerful appeal. Indeed, it was the appalling amount of bereavement and grief entailed by the war that prompted the author to give publicity to his experiences and views. He believed that to read them would give, to many a doubting, sorrowing soul, the consolation of light and faith. So strong and so deep was his conviction on this point that he wrote in the Preface to his book:

"The pain caused by exposing one's own sorrow and its alleviation to possible scoffers becomes almost negligible in view of the service

which it is legitimate to hope may thus be rendered to mourners, if they can derive comfort by learning that communication across the Gulf is possible.”<sup>1</sup>

And when we pass from this motive for publishing the book to the reasons for its wide circulation (over 30,000 copies have already been sold), I think we shall have to ascribe it, first, to the fact that the war has stimulated, to an unprecedented degree, the passion for survival, both national and individual.

In the impressive words of Sir A. Conan Doyle:—“When the war came it brought earnestness into all our souls and made us look more closely at our own beliefs and reassess their values. In the presence of an agonized world, hearing every day of the deaths of the flower of our race in the first promise of their unfulfilled youth, seeing around one the wives and mothers who had no clear conception whither their loved ones had gone, I seemed suddenly to see that this subject was really something tremendous, a call of hope and of guidance to the human race at the time of its deepest affliction.”<sup>2</sup> Small wonder, then, that

<sup>1</sup> “Raymond, or Life and Death,” p. viii.

<sup>2</sup> *Metropolitan Magazine*, January, 1918, p. 10.

Sir Oliver's book has been so widely read. Moreover, in the wake of this passion for survival, with its concomitant emotions, a certain depreciation of mentality has ensued. We see it exemplified in the succession of strange and illogical positions taken by Sir Conan in this article from which I have just quoted. Quite evidently has the war generated in him a singular tendency to easy acceptance of all manner of psychic phenomena.

He accepts the "lowly manifestations" of the Fox sisters, unaware of the fact that in 1888 one of them confessed the rappings were produced by the action of toe-joints and showed just how they wrought the phenomenon. He confesses himself compelled to believe that the celebrated spiritualist, Daniel D. Home, passed out of one window across a space of 30 feet through another window, at a distance of 70 feet from the ground, simply because three gentlemen of repute were prepared to take their oath on having seen the phenomenon. Of its possible explanation in terms of collective hallucination, Sir Conan says not a word. He accepts the affirmation (made by the medium reporting a message from "the other side") that the departed

have "spiritual bodies," but as to what these can possibly be or how such brain-less bodies can have an instrument for thinking or for transmitting thoughts, he says nothing.

He regards the "messages" from the Rev. Stainton Moses as evidence of his survival of death, albeit that many of them fall painfully below what was known of his intellectual ability while on earth. Sir Conan boldly affirms that the group-photograph, referred to at one of Sir Oliver's "sittings," "corresponds exactly to Raymond's description of it," whereas (as we shall see) several points of discrepancy are to be noted.

He accepts mediumistic accounts of conditions in the spirit-world which compel the conclusion that only Christians constitute the population of heaven. What would the Buddha and Zoroaster, Confucius and Mohammed say of the statement that "the Christ rules there, high above all other spirits"?

Because of mental intercommunication between persons separated by three thousand miles Sir Conan concludes that "mind is a thing separate from the body."

This depreciation of mentality, following upon the new passion for survival, is seen again

in the readiness and avidity with which mediumistic utterances are accepted even by trained observers at their face value. And so, as a further consequence it has come to pass that money-making mediums and clairvoyants, taking advantage of this "break" in the mental market, are exploiting speculators in spiritistic phenomena.

But there is a further explanation to be noted for the great popularity of this book. It is that we have here the work of a man who holds a very high place in the scientific world, and because he has spoken with authority on physics, people assume he must be equally authoritative on psychics — a field widely remote from that in which his reputation has been acquired. So in the seventeenth century it was assumed that Sir Isaac Newton must speak with authority on light because of his proved scientific ability as discoverer of the law of gravitation. And precisely as people then turned to Sir Isaac for knowledge on light, so to-day thousands have hailed *Raymond* with loud acclaim.

"Raymond, or Life and Death," is a singularly self-revealing book. It shows us the author's masterful grasp on matters pertain-

ing to physical science. It shows us also the simplicity, the purity, the guilelessness of his nature: a man whose graces of character are no less exceptional than his intellectual attainments. The book lays bare his overwhelming sorrow at the loss of his son and his eagerness for any evidence that might indicate the boy's survival of death, and the possibility of entering into communication with him. Very impressive is the revelation, between the lines, of the noble candor and detachment of Sir Oliver in his attitude toward the alleged communications, maintaining throughout a wonderfully calm, objective and intellectually honorable relation to the evidence. A sifter less honorable than he would have suppressed the absurd and revolting data which form part of the communicated messages, but Sir Oliver frankly confesses "a good deal of this struck me as nonsense, but I kept on recording what was said." His feeling was that the *total* body of evidence should be reported and nothing suppressed — an act indicative of his courage, candor and intellectual integrity. And, as the evidence increased in quantity and improved (for Sir Oliver) in quality, we see it mitigating the man's sorrow, so that in place



of "the spirit of heaviness he puts on the garment of praise."

Not indeed that Sir Oliver had hitherto been a disbeliever in a future life and needed these external evidences to create in him faith. Nay, he makes it most explicit in this book that he was always a believer, in personal immortality, so that if every particle of spiritistic evidence in support of it were to be disproved he would still hold to his faith. In other words, Sir Oliver's faith is not dependent upon this evidence, but the evidence confirmed and strengthened his faith. And what is more, he holds that such evidence for the persistence of personality and spirit-intercourse is amenable to verification by the method of science, no less than physical phenomena. Indeed, he goes so far as to say that he would have absolutely not one whit of interest in psychic phenomena were they not verifiable by the scientific method. Permit me to quote one sentence from his presidential address before the British Association for the Advancement of Science:

"I am one of those who think that the methods of science are not so limited in their scope as has been thought, that they can be ap-

plied much more widely, and that the psychic region can be studied and brought under law also. We wish now to make the attempt. Give us a fair trial, a fair field. Let those who prefer the materialistic hypothesis by all means develop their thesis as far as they can. But let us try what we can do in the psychical region, and see which wins."

The book is divided into three parts. The first is chiefly biographical. It tells us that Raymond Lodge, the youngest son of Sir Oliver and Lady Lodge, volunteered for service in the British army, in September, 1914; that in the following spring he was in the trenches near Ypres, and that on the eighth of September, 1915, he was fatally wounded by a fragment of a German shell in the attack on Hoge Hill. These biographical details are followed by a number of letters, written home from the front. No one, I think, can read these letters without recognizing the fine, brave, noble, heroic character of this lamented young man.

The third part of Sir Oliver's book is by far the most interesting and satisfying. It deals with religio-philosophical problems and presents in successive chapters carefully

worked out definitions of life, death, mind, matter, consciousness. Its greatest value, however, lies in its vindication of a non-materialistic interpretation of the cosmos. Sir Oliver repudiates, and on scientific grounds, the notion that it is possible adequately to interpret the world in terms of motion and matter alone.

But our immediate concern is with the second part of the book. It deals with the evidence adduced by Sir Oliver and by members of his family in support of the belief that Raymond survived death and communicated with his immediate relatives. Here in this second part we have some 160 pages devoted to reports of "sittings" with accredited professional mediums who served as channels of communication between Raymond and members of the Lodge family.

It would be a very serious mistake to suppose that because this is Sir Oliver's latest work it therefore contains stronger evidences than are found in his earlier writings. On the contrary, Sir Oliver himself admits that much stronger evidence in support of human survival of death can be found elsewhere.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See Sir William F. Barrett's "On the Threshold of

"But," he adds, "this is a case that came very closely home to me, and therefore it was very carefully and closely observed."

In closing his introduction to this second part of the work, he said:

"I myself considered the case of survival practically proven before, and clinched by the efforts of Myers and others on the other side. But evidence is cumulative, and the discussion of a fresh case in no wise weakens those that have gone before. Each stick of the faggot must be tested, and unless absolutely broken it adds to the strength of the bundle. To base so momentous a conclusion as a scientific demonstration of human survival on a single instance would doubtless be unwise. But we are justified in examining the evidence in any case of which all the details are known, and in trying to set forth the truth of it as completely and fairly as we may."<sup>4</sup>

There are, according to Sir Oliver, three propositions established by what his book sets forth. First, they who have died continue to live. Second, they who have died continue

the Unseen" for an impressive cumulative array of evidential experiences in support of this hypothesis.

<sup>4</sup> P. 85.

to be interested in the affairs of survivors. Third, they who have died are willing and, under certain conditions, able to communicate with survivors. Now all three of these propositions are based on experiences for which, Sir Oliver contends, there is only one adequate explanation, *viz.*, the spiritistic. Reverting to these experiences in the third part of the book, he wrote:

“Every kind of alternative explanation has been tried, including telepathy. If they had succeeded, well and good. But inasmuch as in my judgment there are phenomena which they cannot explain; and inasmuch as some form of spiritistic hypothesis explains practically all, I have found myself driven back to what I may call the commonsense explanation.”<sup>5</sup>

And by the “common sense explanation” he means the spiritistic explanation.

Turning now to the evidence in support of these three propositions, we have to note that Sir Oliver attaches particular importance to five sittings, of which he says that they have exceptional evidential value, since they are quite free from unverifiable matter. Conse-

<sup>5</sup> P. 369.

quently, the disinterested and conscientious student of Sir Oliver's evidence will fix his attention with special care upon these five sittings.

The first of these sittings occurred at the summer home of Mrs. Leonora Piper. Of her it may be said that she is the most renowned of all living mediums and that she won the respect and approbation of all the leading representatives of the Society for Psychical Research because of her honest, earnest desire to help them in their research work, because of her entire freedom from deception, having successfully met every test to which it was put, and again, because of the high degree of accuracy in her trance-utterances.

On the 8th of September, 1915, six days before Raymond was killed, a Miss Robbins visited Mrs. Piper and at their sitting the latter announced that Frederick Myers had a message to deliver to Sir Oliver Lodge — the same Myers, indeed, who has enriched our literature with "Essays" that are models of English style and whose supreme contribution to psychical research is the noble octavo volume on "Human Personality and Survival of Death." Myers' message was as follows:



“ You, Lodge, take the part of the poet, and I will act as Faunus.” In this cryptic utterance Sir Oliver saw a reference to one of the Odes of Horace in which that poet describes how he was saved from being killed by a falling tree through the intervention of a Faun — one of the rural deities of the ancient Roman religion.

Now, the *natural* application of this message would seem to be: Disaster threatens you, Lodge, but I, Myers, will save you from it. Certainly the message does not suggest that Raymond is going to be killed. Had he been exposed to some grave danger, and escaped it, or had he been wounded and recovered, there would then be some measure of agreement between the facts and the message. But the very most the message can mean, no matter to whom the calamity be referred, is escape from death through the intervention of some unseen power. Yet, in the light of what actually happened on September 14th, Sir Oliver sees a reference to Raymond's death in Myers' use of the Horatian ode. Yes, this is the meaning Sir Oliver gives it, in the light of what actually happened on September 8th. According to him, Myers meant: Your son

is going to be killed, but I, Myers, will lighten the blow for you, Lodge, by taking care of him, and endeavoring to put you in touch with him. But even if we grant this rather strained interpretation of the cryptic message, we are forced to ask, if Myers meant to notify Sir Oliver that Raymond would be killed, why this elusive and far-fetched way of expressing it, causing Sir Oliver to consult persons sufficiently familiar with the classics to interpret the allusion for him? Like the Delphic oracle, the message is made to admit of various interpretations and to suit different situations. If Myers could remember an ode of Horace and get the difficult name "Faunus" across, why could he not simply say: Your son is going to be killed, but I will take care of him? Mediums insist that the dead have great difficulty in making their meaning clear. But in that case why should it be easier for Myers to recall an Ode of Horace and refer to it cryptically, than for him to say simply: Your son Raymond is going to be killed, but I will protect him? It is worth noting, *en passant*, that if this be in truth a communication from Myers it proves prevision as a power possessed by the dead in addition to their having knowl-

edge of the past and of the present. For, in that case, Myers was able to foresee, on September 8th, the precise position of Raymond on September 14th and that a fragment of a German shell would kill him on that day. Sir Oliver recognized the difficulty involved in attributing foreknowledge to the dead, saying, "I do not understand how anticipation of the future is possible; I do not dogmatize; I try to keep an open mind;" adding, however, that "prognostication can hardly be part of the evidence for survival."<sup>6</sup>

The second case cited by Sir Oliver as having "evidential value" concerns the results of two sittings at which Raymond is said to have mentioned and described a group photograph, the existence of which no member of the Lodge family had any knowledge whatsoever, but which Sir Oliver says "was later verified in a satisfactory and complete manner." Two weeks after Raymond was killed a medium named Peters, at a sitting with Lady Lodge, said:

"You have several portraits of this boy; before he went away you had got a good portrait of him, two, no, three; two where he is

<sup>6</sup> Pp. 314-316.

alone, and one where he is in a group of other men."

Sir Oliver, commenting upon this, says: "We had single photographs of him, of course, and in uniform, but we did not know of the existence of a photograph in which he was one of a group."<sup>7</sup>

On November 29th there came a letter to Lady Lodge from a Mrs. Cheves saying that she had a photograph of a group of officers in which her own son and Raymond appeared; would she, Lady Lodge, like a copy? A grateful reply was written Mrs. Cheves, but before the photograph arrived, Sir Oliver, on December 3rd, had a sitting with another remarkable medium, a Mrs. Leonard, and he took occasion at this sitting to ask Raymond several questions concerning the photograph, receiving through this medium the answers as delivered to her from "Fedá," Raymond's "control." For, in the process of spirit-intercourse, a double medium of communication is involved. Besides (a) the *communicator* or sender of messages, on the other side, and (b) the *sitter* on ours, who receives them, and (c) the *medium*, whose *normal* consciousness is in abey-

ance but whose physiological mechanism is used as a channel for transmission of the message, there is also (d) the *control*, a person on "the other side" akin to the medium on ours, whose function it is to receive the original message and transmit it to the medium who is temporarily used for the purpose of taking, in a trance-state, the sender's message.

Among the questions Sir Oliver asked were the following:

Q. "Do you recollect the photograph at all?" A. "He thinks there were others taken with him, not one or two, but several." Yet the photograph contains twenty-one officers in all.

Q. "Does he remember how he looked in the photograph?" A. "No, he does not remember how he looked." But how, we ask, could he help remembering? seeing that this photograph was taken only twenty days before his death, and when we note, moreover, that in his diary, Raymond had made a memorandum of this photograph, and in all probability had seen a proof of it, as is customary.

Q. "Were they soldiers?" A. "Yes, a mixed lot. Somebody called C— was in it with him, and somebody called R—, K—,

K—, K—, he says something about K—.” But not a single one in that group of 21 officers had a name beginning with “K.”

Q. “Did he have a stick?” A. “He does not remember that.” Strange, when every one of the group had a stick as well as himself. A. (continued) “He remembers that somebody wanted to lean on him, but is not sure whether he was taken with some one leaning on him.” When we examine the photograph all that we see is the officer behind Raymond resting his forearm lightly on Raymond’s shoulder. But when we look at the next officer, we observe that his hand also rests lightly on the shoulder of the officer sitting next to Raymond — a very common position, as many other such group photographs show.

Q. “Was it out of doors?” A. “Yes, practically.”

Q. “What do you mean? ‘Yes, practically’ must mean out of doors or not out of doors. You mean yes, don’t you?” A. “Feda says he means yes, because he says ‘practically.’ It might have been a shelter. It looks like a black background with lines at the back of them.” It is generally known that photographs of officers are, as a rule, taken



out of doors, and against or near a building. But the remarkable thing is that Raymond, *with his back to the building*, should have been so impressed by these vertical lines.

In the light of these facts concerning the photograph and in the light of the answers given to six of Sir Oliver's questions, it is surely difficult to see wherein the "exceptional value" he ascribed to the sitting consists.

Why cannot Raymond give the name of a single friend in that group? He is asked for it in vain. Yet just one name would have had some degree of evidential value. We are told that the memory of the dead is imperfect. But while Myers can remember an Ode of Horace as well as the difficult name "Faunus," Raymond cannot remember the name of a single soldier, although he has been separated from them only 20 days.

I pass over the third and fourth of these sittings, because their "evidential value" appears to be on a par with that of the first and second. The same vague, elusive, halting character of Raymond's answers to questions impresses us here anew and with cumulative force. Indeed, one gets the impression as one reads that the medium is guessing at the an-

swers to Sir Oliver's questions. And I bid you note that this hypothesis is not (in the present state of our ignorance on the subject) to be considered as illegitimate. When more is known of the mental operations of mediums in delivering trance-utterances, we shall be in a better position to judge the worth of this hypothesis.

Coming to the fifth in the series of "evidential sittings" readers of the book will remember the reference to a peacock that the Lodges had in their garden, and which they facetiously styled "Mr. Jackson." Sir Oliver is once more at a sitting with Mrs. Leonard and in the course of his customary questioning he asked concerning this peacock.<sup>8</sup>

Q. "Do you remember a bird in our garden?" A. "Yes, hopping about?"

Q. "No, Feda, a big bird." A. "Of course not sparrows, he says. Yes, he does."

Q. Feda (*sotto voce*): "Did he hop, Raymond?" A. "No, he says he would not call it a hop."

<sup>8</sup> Here again, as in the previous sitting, Mrs. Leonard's child-control, the illiterate Feda, is supposed to be speaking for Raymond, through the medium, Mrs. Leonard.

Q. "Well, we will go to something else now; ask him if he remembers Mr. Jackson."

Note the cleverness of Sir Oliver in thus attempting to put Raymond off the track and thereby test the genuineness of the communication.

A. "Yes; going away, going away, he says. He used to come to the door; he used to see him every day, he says, every day."

Feda (*sotto voce*): "What did he do, Raymond?" "He says nothing. He's thinking. It's Feda's fault, he says."

Q. "Well, never mind. Report anything he says, whether it makes sense or not." A. "He says he fell down. He hurt himself — pain in arms and hands!"

Q. "Was he a friend of the family?" A. "No, not a friend of the family, scarcely a day passed without his name being mentioned. . . ." ("Feda feels sure he's joking — he's making fun of Feda.")

Q. "No, tell me all he says." A. "He says put him on a pedestal; no, that they put him on a pedestal. He was considered very wonderful and he 'speaks he wouldn't have appreciated it if he had known, but he didn't know, he says. It sounds nonsense what he

says. Fedra has an impression he's mixing him up with the bird."

Sir Oliver tells us that the bird's legs had been rheumatic, that he had of late tumbled on them and finally died the week before the sitting.

The dead bird had been stuffed and put on a pedestal. When later in this sitting Raymond seems to have an inkling of these facts, Sir Oliver, with splendid restraint, unflaggingly skeptical (fearing the possibility of a too sanguine acceptance of the spiritistic hypothesis), admitted that "these details might have been received by the medium from him through telepathy."<sup>9</sup> The same rigorously challenging attitude appeared at a later sitting when the medium reported that on "the other side" cigars and whisky and soda were to be had, and that the effect of these stimulants soon palled. Of this declaration Sir Oliver said that "little value was to be attached to it" and that it "might have emanated from the mind of the medium direct."

Yet what logical warrant can there be for thus differentiating messages from the sender

<sup>9</sup> P. 258.

and spontaneous utterances of the medium? And how, if telepathy entered into it, can "the episode of Mr. Jackson and the bird" be considered "a good one," as Sir Oliver maintains, or how shall it be classed with incidents having "evidential value"?

Estimating the significance of these sittings and the ground of his acceptance of what they have revealed, Sir Oliver says:

"The hypothesis of continued existence in another set of conditions, and of possible communication across the boundary, is not an egregious one made for the sake of comfort and consolation, or because of dislike to the idea of extinction. It is a hypothesis which has been gradually forced upon the author, as upon many other persons, by the stringent coercion of definite experience. The evidence is cumulative and has broken the back of all legitimate and reasonable criticism."<sup>10</sup>

But, with all due respect to this frank and confident assertion, there are those of us who, after a candid and impartial study of the evidence, find that their skepticism has not been reduced, much less removed.

Just here let me meet the suggestion that

<sup>10</sup> P. 288.

“temperament” determines one’s relation to objective evidence for belief in human survival and spirit-intercourse. Perhaps, after all, it is temperament — that physiological condition by which the thought, feeling and action of people is permanently affected — which largely decides our leaning, with Podmore and William James, to the side of skepticism, or with Lodge and Hyslop to that of belief. Just as they who have had experience of a happy married life are very likely to disapprove of divorce, so they who have their dear ones still about them and who perhaps have never had the unassuageable heart-ache of an irreparable loss will take their stand with the skeptical representatives of the Society for Psychical Research. On the other hand, they whose hearts are hungering for the renewal of sacred ties with those whom they have “loved long since and lost awhile” will wait, as did Sir Oliver and his fellow-believers, for “the touch of a vanished hand and the sound of a voice that is still.”

Happily, however, for us all, we can acquire assurance of the reality of the immortal life without resorting to Ouija-boards or to mediumistic séances. The fact is that our one



*ultimate* ground for faith in the persistence of our essential selfhood is, as we shall see in Part IV, subjective and ethical, rather than objective and experimental.

If, as it appears, the evidence at these five sittings proved satisfactory and conclusive to Sir Oliver, we do well to remember that during these sittings he was suffering from a deep personal sorrow, and therefore would scarcely be qualified for thorough-going scientific investigation of mediumistic utterances. Under the stress and strain of such a deepening grief — the days heavy with the dull sense of an irreparable loss — his critical acumen would of necessity be somewhat blunted; nay more, he might well feel that it would be a kind of irreverence to doubt the genuineness of statements purporting to come from a dearly beloved son.

Reviewing the evidence with all the impartiality and candor of which I am capable, I confess that it appears nebulous, elusive, halting, confused. On all crucial points, the medium, through whom Raymond is said to be speaking, is painfully brief, while on all matters of no particular consequence the medium is usually garrulous. And this criticism applies not only to the evidence offered in this

latest book, but also to that adduced by Sir Oliver in earlier writings.<sup>11</sup> Here, as elsewhere, he exhibits the error of inferring from the mere conceivability of a disembodied spirit existing, the probable existence of it. But, to argue thus is to interpret the phenomenon ahead of the evidence, because, as yet, there is no evidence to show that spirits can exist independently of a body. Nor again is there evidence of communication, because, as yet, it is wholly unintelligible to us how a discarnate intelligence can influence another personality here on earth, how the disembodied Raymond can confer with his "control" (Feda) and she, in turn, "set into operation a physical organism (the medium) lent for the occasion"<sup>12</sup> that a message may be received by the sitter. True, belief in disembodied spirits is not inconceivable, but that gives no warrant for believing they probably exist. It does not follow that because a proposition cannot be disproved, it may be accepted as probably true.<sup>13</sup> That intelligence, or the inter-

<sup>11</sup> See Addington Bruce, "Adventures in the Psychical," pp. 198 sq.

<sup>12</sup> P. 358.

<sup>13</sup> This unwarranted inference appears again in Sir

communication of human beings exists anywhere else than on this earth requires evidence. It will not do to say that because intelligence and intercommunication are conceivable as existing elsewhere, they probably do.

Again and again throughout the volume, more especially in the second part, one is forced to question the propriety of Sir Oliver's practice (for which he has a strange predilection) of regarding as "facts" what on careful observation prove to be only *particular impressions* made upon him by facts. Thus, for example, he cites, with unqualified approbation, the remark of Mrs. Sidgwick that the hand of the medium (Mrs. Piper) while engaged in automatic writing "seemed tremendously pleased" and "gave the impression of one dancing with delight at having achieved something." Here the "facts" were that the hand moved, waved, thumped; all else is sheer interpretation of what the hand did; it is not *fact* at all. A similar confusion of fact and interpretation appears in Sir Oliver's ascription of the personal pronoun to an inanimate object, such as a table or chair. Well enough

A. Conan Doyle's contribution to the January (1918) number of the *Metropolitan Magazine*.

for Sir Oliver to pity prejudiced people for their lack of the scientific spirit, but it is scarcely scientific to personify a table or to make what is mere interpretation of a fact appear as itself fact. How can a hand "turn itself to the sitter when it wishes to be addressed by him," or "turn away if distracted by some other communication" or "turn itself for further information to a part of the room in which no one appears"? <sup>14</sup>

Sir Oliver maintains that "communications must necessarily be faulty because our minds are still hampered by their connection with our bodies," an assumption which reappears in Sir William Barrett's book. "Since the exercise of our mental faculties is apparently hindered by our bodily organism we may infer that when we are freed from 'this muddy vesture of decay' these faculties will no longer be trammelled as they are now." <sup>15</sup> But what warrant is there for such an assumption? What justifiable ground can there be for regarding the mind as "trammelled" by its con-

<sup>14</sup> See the *Hibbert Journal*, April, 1917, pp. 161 foll. for a fuller exposition of this point by Charles Mercier.

<sup>15</sup> Sir William F. Barrett, "On the Threshold of the Unseen," p. 283.

nection with the body since we have no experience whatever of mind apart from body? For aught we know our minds might not be able to operate at all dissociated from the body. Of course, we dare not say they cannot so operate, but the proof of any hampering of the mind because of its connection with the body rests with Sir Oliver and Sir William, who have ventured the assumption of such a hindrance.

To excuse the defects of obscurity, discontinuity, incoherence and incompleteness that mark so many of the alleged "messages," on the ground of "amnesia"—the transition to "the other side," causing forgetfulness—would involve a surrender of the sole remaining means for identifying the deceased. Now that bodily continuity has been destroyed, how, with loss of memory, shall identity be established? Certainly the appeal to his "moral characteristics" will not serve as a means of identification any more than it would serve the bank-clerk had he nothing but these to go by when about to cash a cheque. A million men might easily be taken for Raymond Lodge were moral characteristics the sole source of identification.

If we agree with Mrs. Henry Sidgwick <sup>16</sup> that the trance-state of the medium is "a self-induced hypnosis in which her hypnotic self personates different characters unconsciously (or subconsciously), believing herself to be the person she represents," then indeed have we an explanation for all those cases of false statements, errors of sundry sorts, the fanciful personation of great historic characters (*e.g.*, Moses, Sir Walter Scott), and again, the personations of people who never existed at all, *e.g.*, Bessie Beals, the alleged niece of President Hall of Clark University, who asked the entranced Mrs. Piper if she could "communicate." And she forthwith did, giving various messages at several sittings! <sup>17</sup>

Another assumption not to be overlooked, is that life on "the other side" is "finer," "higher," than on ours. Do the communications recorded in this book warrant that assumption? On the contrary, they incline us to believe the very opposite. Mark you, it is not the alleged allusions made by the deceased to trifling objects and incidents that are here criticized. For, the recalling of these might

<sup>16</sup> See Proceedings S. P. R. Dec., 1915.

<sup>17</sup> See Sir Wm. Barrett, *op. cit.*, p. 186.



well serve to convince intimate friends that just one person and no other must be the source from which the message comes. To refer to a brown-handled penknife, or a blue-bordered handkerchief, or a pair of silk socks, might well be deemed, because of associations, the surest sign that the memory of the deceased had not weakened, nor love lessened because of transition to another environment.

But, wholly apart from these, no unprejudiced reader can fail to feel, after reading what Raymond is reported to have said at the various sittings, that his many incoherent, halting, confused utterances show a deplorable deterioration of personality as compared with what his parents said of him at the beginning of the book. And the self-same sort of discrepancy appears also in the reported utterances of other departed spirits. Recall, for instance, those of F. W. H. Myers, who during his terrestrial life took rank among leading men of letters in his day. What a far cry from the English of his two noble volumes of "Essays, Classical and Modern," to the bad grammar, wretched rhetoric and vulgar colloquialisms met with in communications said to have come from him! To read them is to

feel depressed by the lamentable decline of power which his personality has suffered in the changed environment. Or, consider the scholarly Anglican priest, Stainton Moses, and that philosophical writer, styled "George Pelham" in the literature of psychical research. Here were men of marked intellectual ability and of fine moral character, yet to read some of the utterances they are said to have delivered through accredited mediums is to marvel at Sir Oliver's assumption, nay, to reject it as painfully disproved by the content of the messages. If human personality can thus deteriorate, what is there in life on "the other side" that we should desire it?

Very significant it is that the mediums who served as channels of communication in the cases just referred to were, for the most part, uneducated, unrefined, illiterate. For, their ignorance and their crudenesses suggest the possibility that *they*, not the communicators, were the source of what was "transmitted." Indeed it is not unreasonable to surmise that all the sittings reported by Sir Oliver and others prove no more than unsuspected mental powers of the medium, his (or her) utterances nothing more than a product of subliminal

activity in the medium, or sitter, or in both.

We know that the stomach is a laboratory in which there proceeds, unconsciously to us, the process of assimilation, converting the food we ate into the red blood that flows into this other laboratory of the brain and operating there, too, unconsciously to us. And precisely as medical science taps the stomach and other organs below the line of our consciousness of their functioning, so, for aught we know, the brain may be tapped by powerful mediums, below the line of our consciousness of its production of thought and emotion.

And this leads me to the remark that the next step in the progress of psychical research might well be the appointment, by the Society for Psychical Research, of a commission to institute a fresh and thoroughgoing examination of such mediums as are mentioned in this book, together with the phenomena of mediumship. That commission should include in its personnel a psychologist, a psycho-therapist, a biologist, a business man and a lawyer — all five of them to be experts in their respective vocations, and the moral character of each to be as unquestioned as his vocational ability. And until some such commission shall have been

appointed and its findings reported, the proper attitude for us of the laity should be one of suspended judgment. If there be any one thing that 36 years of psychical research has brought home to us more than another, it is that we lay-people are no more competent to pronounce on the genuineness and origin of mediumistic utterances than we are to pronounce on the genuineness of a Syriac manuscript. It is simply preposterous to suppose that we, untrained people, are capable of determining the merits of a séance. Very little weight is to be attached to the ordinary spectator's account of what has been seen, so easy is it to report inaccurately or to miss seeing what is most essential. What better proof of this than the accounts given of tricks performed by a professional conjurer? What man or woman is there who would dare to deny, *on the basis of what had been seen*, that the handkerchief was burnt, the watch smashed, or the hat destroyed! And the reason we dare not deny what we have seen is that our eyes were fixed on the left hand, upon which the conjurer concentrated our attention, while he did the trick with the right. It is simply silly to say that anybody with a good pair of

eyes and a good pair of ears is competent to judge of the genuineness of mediumistic phenomena. Even Sir Oliver himself was deceived — and more than once. So, too, were his confrères, Crookes and Hodgson, Wallace and Myers. Consequently it behooves us, who are untrained observers, to refrain from passing judgment on baffling and perplexing psychic phenomena until the findings of the proposed commission warrant it.

Finally, let me call attention to two dangers against which we must be constantly on our guard. First, the danger intimated by Sir Oliver in one of the sentences which served as an introduction to this address, the danger, namely, of venturing to affirm, in this partially explored universe, what is possible and what impossible. As Sir Oliver has said:

“Let us be as cautious and critical, aye, as skeptical as we like, but let us also be patient and persevering and fair. Let us not start with a preconceived notion of what is possible and what is impossible in this almost unexplored universe.”

Lavoisier, you remember, boldly affirmed that there were no stones in the sky, and there-

fore none could fall to the earth. But the meteorites on the ground floor of our Museum of Natural History are a standing rebuke to his lack of intellectual modesty. Similarly Dr. Lardner, the Irish physicist, was rash enough to predict that ocean steam-navigation would be forever impossible; his treatise, however, was published in time for the first trans-atlantic liner to export copies of it to the United States. Auguste Comte, the Positivist, committed himself to the prediction that man could never know the composition of the stars. But one day the spectroscope was invented and as a result we are as familiar with star dust as with street dust. Still another scientist of distinction declared, with unreserved assurance, that long-distance intercommunication with only Nature's elements as media of transmission must remain forever an idyllic dream. Yet, only a little while ago naval officers in Washington talked, by wireless, with naval officers in Paris and so distinct were their voices as to be recognized by friends in the Hawaiian islands.

In all probability coming generations will be disposed to attach great importance to the belief in a hereafter only as it shall be re-



enforced by evidential means. Special significance therefore attaches to careful examination of whatever purports to be proof of human survival of death.

True, nothing purporting to come from the dead has yet been accepted as genuine, except by a very small minority of the human race. But who will dare to say that nothing *can* come worthy to receive adoption by the majority of mankind? People have wanted to fly ever since the days of Dædalus; and though all the materials for flying were in existence, no one had put them together in an aëroplane till the age of the Wrights. Argon had been a constituent element of the atmosphere for untold æons but no one knew it till the time of Lord Raleigh. There are many things about us of which we are ignorant, but because they have not been discovered it will not do to say they never can be. Because nothing generally satisfying has yet come from alleged intercourse with deceased persons, we dare not say nothing ever will come.

The second danger to be scrupulously averted is that of resorting too readily to supramundane causes for mysterious psychic phenomena. In this age of unprecedented progress in

science, an age that has witnessed the discovery of "Neon," of the "discontinuity of matter," and of the so-called "mentiferous ether" (analogous to the luminiferous ether) we ought to beware of the easy and popular practice of ascribing otherwise inexplicable "manifestations" and "messages" to the agency of departed spirits.

Not until the realm of terrene agencies has been fully and thoroughly explored dare we fall back on super-terrestrial causes. Grant, with Myers, that there is an "irreducible minimum" of phenomena for which no satisfactory explanation can now be offered other than the spiritistic; grant that there are utterances of Mrs. Piper's that absolutely defy adequate explanation in terms of any cause familiar to us; yet must we beware of ignoring that established canon of investigation which bids us *refrain* from falling back upon strange, unfamiliar, supramundane explanations until this darkest Africa of the human mind has been thoroughly explored. Recall, for a moment, the case reported by Coleridge in his "Biographia Literaria." It has exceptional value as a permanent object-lesson for all those persons who too easily accept the spiritistic hypothesis

when trying to account for some exceedingly abnormal phenomenon. When a finely educated lady tells me she cannot see how any one can read Sir Oliver's evidence for immortality in "Raymond" and not believe in the reality of a hereafter I see in the remark (with all due respect to her attainments) a reflection on her power to sift evidence and weigh premises from which plausible conclusions are easily inferred. I see, too, an attitude of mind toward the question at issue for which Coleridge's case is a corrective not to be forgotten. 'Tis the case of a young woman who could neither read nor write, yet, during a nervous-fever attack, talked Latin, Greek and Hebrew with strident voice and clear enunciation. Her utterances were recorded directly as she spoke them and were found to consist of a series of sentences wholly intelligible as such, yet bearing no relation to one another. Physiologists and psychologists examined the case with scrupulous care. No trace of fraud, collusion or trickery was anywhere to be found. None of her fellow-citizens in the town where she lived could throw any light upon her strange and sudden linguistic power. Naturally, hosts of people as-

sumed that these classical utterances on the lips of an ignorant girl must have proceeded from some other person, living or dead, by means of telepathy, or some other unknown mode of communication. And if any one among the host of believers in this explanation of the case had been confronted by a skeptic and said to him, how otherwise could this sudden acquisition of those languages be accounted for? the skeptic would have had no alternative explanation to offer. The super-normal explanation would have been the only available one and it would have been generally conceded that the facts bore out the explanation.

But now it so happened that a doctor, deeply interested in the case, after prolonged, painstaking investigation discovered that this girl at the age of nine had entered the service of an elderly clergyman and remained there till the time of his death. It had been his habit for years to walk up and down the hall, to the open kitchen door, reciting passages from favorite Greek, Latin and Hebrew authors. A careful survey of the clergyman's books brought to light a number of sentences identical with those which the servant in fever-

ravings had uttered. Thus the origin of her strange ability was no longer questioned. For, it is well known that the so-called sub-conscious mind records impressions and ideas, unknown to the receiver. And from just this case, the inference may be legitimately drawn regarding other such cases, that, were the facts known, they would warrant a similar explanation and consequently a dispensing with the spiritistic hypothesis. What a lesson is here for those who all too easily and quickly resort to supra-mundane explanations for phenomena that might be explained by known causes were all the facts in the case at our service! Let it be ever remembered that lack of complete explanation is no warrant for accepting a conjectural explanation. The only true inference to be drawn from lack of explanation is lack of information. Nor again will it do to offer one mystery as explanation of another, *e.g.* telepathy, as an explanation of long-distance communications without the aid of the ordinary channels of intercourse. For, telepathy is merely a synonym for thought-transference, but as to *how* the thought is transferred, we know as yet absolutely nothing. Telepathy expresses merely the idea of trans-

mission without the use of the ordinary sensory channels of communication. Consequently the appeal to telepathy in accounting for psychic phenomena is just as much an appeal to the unknown as is the spiritistic hypothesis. To be sure, if there be such response between souls separated by great distance, it *suggests* (it does not prove), that if we can get on at times without the ordinary channels while still on earth, we may be able to dispense with them altogether. That a human mind should be able to reach down into the stored memories of some other mind, and from the mass select just the one pertinent to the given occasion, defies explanation in the present state of our knowledge. On the other hand, we are in duty bound to make use of what experience and testimony we have and apply it to cases that await explanation. Take, for example, the case of the celebrated Patience Worth of St. Louis who refuses to permit thorough-going, competent investigation of her strange ability to write Elizabethan poetry and prose. We cannot, we dare not (if we be true to what facts we have established from study of other cases), conclude that her power is evidence of spirit-intercourse with a



person of the Elizabethan era. All that the facts in her case prove is that in some now indeterminate way this woman uses idioms which in her customary mental state she is incapable of producing. With entire confidence may we affirm (in the light of Coleridge's case already explained) that if *all the facts* in her case could be ascertained, the inexplicable faculty she possesses would be found to have a natural, terrestrial and contemporary source. The refusal to permit investigation of her case is based upon the fear that the power may forthwith vanish. But Mrs. Piper's power did not disappear despite the extremely severe tests to which its genuineness was subjected. No candid examination of strange powers can really affect them if they be in truth real. And even were her power to go, the loss would be more than made up by the knowledge that her gift is not supernatural. No genuinely scientific investigator in our day would think of attributing to spirit-agency the occurrence of a mysterious phenomenon which his formula had failed to explain, albeit that Newton and other celebrities in the scientific world had done so. When Kepler discovered that the planets move in an ellipse and not in a circle

he was wholly at a loss to account for the strange phenomenon. Accordingly he concluded that some supernatural agency must be responsible for this strange and unintelligible planetary motion. Each of the planets he solemnly declared, is attended by an angel who personally conducts it on its elliptical tour. But one day the law of gravitation became more fully understood and it was found altogether adequate to explain the mysterious movement. And so the guiding angels were dismissed. Is it unreasonable to anticipate a possible corresponding dismissal of the good spirits that are now said to be the source of many a psychic phenomenon? The sciences of medicine and psychology have enabled us to dispose of evil spirits as the causers of disease and insanity. And this good riddance should be remembered when seeking explanation for those psychic phenomena that still await possible elucidation in terms of psycho-physics, a science that has not yet emerged from its infancy. It may well be that with further progress in psychical research some terrestrial explanation may be furnished that will be altogether satisfactory. It may be that with fuller investigation of (a) the medium's mind and

(b) the mind of the sitter, of (c) thought-transference, of (d) subliminal activity, that the spiritistic hypothesis will prove superfluous.

Sir Oliver reminds us that while "progress in knowledge began when supernatural causes were eliminated and treated as non-existent, yet unknown causes of an immaterial (or transcendental) character may exist nevertheless, and it is part of the business of science to discover and begin to attend to them. The effort may be ridiculed and resented, it may be ambitious, but it is perfectly legitimate and, if it fails, it fails."

Meanwhile it behooves us not to ask contemptuously: Can any good thing come out of this Nazareth of research? Nor, again, should we, in the present state of our knowledge, accept a theory, not in itself convincing, simply because it has no rival, or because none other is now available. So to do would be to make the theory an opiate for the uneasiness of suspended judgment. Nay more, so to do is to violate the ethics of the intellect which gives us no warrant for settling down on a theory simply because it gives us mental peace. Because Sir Oliver has tried telepathy and all

other available explanations in vain it does not give him the right to commit himself to the spiritistic hypothesis other than tentatively, awaiting further observation and experimentation.

Why this fretful anxiety to settle *at once* upon an explanation, rather than wait till research has been pushed beyond its present limits? Strange as it may seem, even the realm of science is not free from men with a passion for settling upon an explanation rather than suspending judgment till *all* the evidence is in. Witness the case of Kepler, who felt in duty bound to give an immediate explanation of the elliptical movement of the planets, but felt no moral obligation to suspend explanation till known forces were more fully understood, one of which (gravitation) eventually accounted for the strange phenomenon. Why this craving for finality? Why, in the present state of our knowledge, "prefer the completed circle to the suggestive parabola"? 'Tis because of this preference that so many people go over to such pseudo-sciences as astrology, palmistry and phrenology. The champions of each of these gather all the facts that support their theory, and calmly turn their backs on all

other facts that would overthrow the theory. Better by far it is to keep the windows of our minds open toward the Jerusalem of truth, with no curtains of prejudice within and no shutters of finality without.

## IV

### MODERN MATERIALISM AND REBIRTH OF THE IMMORTAL HOPE

THE reader will recall in Part I, the reasons given for the rise of present-day psychic movements. Chief among these reasons was that of the disquieting effect produced by the philosophical materialism of Büchner and Moleschott as manifested in the middle of the last century. It was for the most part, as a reaction from the spiritually-blighting doctrines propounded by these philosophers, that the psychic movements of our time arose. These thinkers held that "science had already pushed her investigations so far that the last vestige of a reasonable basis for belief in a hereafter had vanished." Whereupon there appeared Spiritualism, Psychical Research, Theosophy, Christian Science, the New Thought — each in its own way seeking to prove that the blow which materialism had struck at the most cherished of all beliefs was not at all fatal as had been supposed.



But, of late, the contention of materialism with regard to human survival of death has been urged afresh by representatives as renowned as their forerunners in the nineteenth century.

It will therefore be worth our while, before leaving the subject, briefly to examine the character and claims of this later materialism with special reference to its doctrine of the sequel to death. For, we all endorse the apostle's precept, "prove all things, hold fast that which is good." Moreover, if we would rest securely and serenely in our faith we cannot do better than face squarely and dispassionately the claims of a system which, if true, would mean the destruction of that faith. Say what we will, the fact remains that faith is strong only as it puts doctrines to the proof. Fear and laziness can *accept* beliefs, it takes courage and consecration to *question* them. Doubt has been decried by clerics in every clime and in every age, yet it remains, as of old, an indispensable condition of human progress. Doubt is the purgatory through which the thinker passes on his way to the heaven of truth. Doubt is the germ, out of which the creed of the future will be evolved, because the

creeds of to-day express the satisfied doubts of past ages. Doubt has indeed a blessed ministry to fulfill. We become aware of the essential worth of our spiritual heritage only after we have yielded ourselves to that ministry. It was so with the illustrious English preacher, Frederick Robertson, when in the Austrian Tyrol he passed through doubt of God and Duty to a "provisional morality" and thence to a transfiguration of his inherited faith and ethics. It was so with Arthur Henry Hallam, as his dearest friend testified in the stirring cantos of "In Memoriam":

He fought with doubt and gathered strength,  
He would not make his judgment blind,  
He faced the spectres of the mind  
And laid them; thus he came at length  
To find a stronger faith his own.

In the light of so inspiring an experience, known to many another seeker after truth, and with the hope of arriving at a like result, let us face that "spectre of the mind"—modern materialism—and see if it be true that "science has pushed her investigations so far that the last vestige of a reasonable basis for belief in immortality has vanished."

I fancy no thinkers are more avowedly averse to dogmatism, to fixing the limits beyond which human knowledge cannot reach, than are the scientists. Yet they, no less than the theologians, have been often found guilty of it.

Ernst Haeckel, the Nestor of modern materialism, boldly affirmed that "all phenomena, from the most material to the most spiritual, can be accounted for in terms of motion and matter." Yet, there is not a single fact in the region of life, or mind, or consciousness, or emotion, or purpose, or will, that dynamics has actually explained.<sup>1</sup>

Sir E. Ray Lancaster, in a recent address before a society of physicists, said: "We cannot know, or ever hope to know, whence this physical mechanism has come, or whither it goes; these are things that can never be explained by science." But surely such extravagant generalizations "profane the modesty of science," which refrains from affirming what is possible and what is impossible in this progressive world.

Sir Ernst Schaefer, the predecessor of Sir Oliver Lodge as president of the British As-

<sup>1</sup> See Sir Oliver Lodge: "Raymond," pp. 286-7.

sociation for the Advancement of Science, speaking for himself and for his fellow-materialists, said they all were one in their common denial of any purpose in the universe. But how can any sane person profess to know enough about the universe as a whole to indulge in such a denial? And this same champion of materialism further denied that there exists "any form of mental or spiritual entity that cannot be explained in terms of matter and motion." But even within the realm of physics itself, as Sir Oliver has shown, there exist at least two such entities, light and electricity. And while heat, sound and the phenomena of gases and liquids have been reduced to matter and motion, there is a whole brood of non-physical phenomena never yet explained in these materialistic terms.

Surely it is to be regretted that men of unquestioned scientific ability will entrench themselves in such dogmatic denials and in their battle with the idealists imagine that this fortress of materialism is a sufficient protection against their volley of verified facts.

Contrast this spirit with the humility, reserve and modesty of Sir Isaac Newton who, when he reflected on the vast realm of the

unknown, compared himself to a little child playing on the shore of an infinite ocean and picking up here and there a pebble.

Just here permit me to register my unqualified abhorrence of dogmatism in dealing with the question of the hereafter. Dogmatism denotes something other than the wish to impose one's views on another. The essential idea involved in the term is affirmation without reason, assertion without evidence. A dogma is an undebatable proposition, one declared to be true on the basis of some authority regarded as too sacred to be questioned. Thus, *e. g.*, the dogmatist is one who holds that no question can be opened which the Bible has closed. As though any question could ever be closed so long as any one is competent to reopen it. In the estimation of the dogmatist there are certain questions too sacred to be investigated — as though the sacredness of a belief did not depend (in part, at least) upon its verification.

Nor again, am I a whit less strongly opposed to sentimentalism than to dogmatism. I, for one, am utterly unwilling to satisfy my heart at the expense of my head, to sacrifice

reason for the sake of faith, albeit that I recognize the place where knowledge fails and faith may rightly hold sway. If the temple of the immortal hope be not spacious enough to hold both my head and my heart, I will stay outside and wait for more satisfying evidence of what I devoutly hope is true. Dear as is the word immortality to me, there is one word dearer still — truth. Deep as is my desire for personal survival of death, my desire not to be deceived, not to be fooled, is deeper still. Surely the deepest passion of the soul must be to know the truth, whatever it may be, and then calmly, loyally to adjust oneself to it. The prayer of Ajax was for light; there can be no nobler prayer.

No one can be said to *know* that he is immortal. When Emerson and Theodore Parker, Addison and Samuel Taylor Coleridge affirmed that they knew they were immortal, the most they could possibly have meant was that they had a very strong assurance, a very powerful intimation, of immortality. Whether or not we are immortal is a question as to whether or not we shall continue to live after the state called Death; and since that cannot be decided or realized until it occurs, no one can say, in



advance, that he knows it. Before we can claim knowledge concerning the hereafter we must be able to add to our reasoning experience, because into every act of human knowledge there enter both reason and experience; and of immortality no one can be said to have had experience. True, the Spiritualists make that claim, but we have examined the grounds of their contention and see that they do not warrant the claim.

Nor, again, can any one be said to *know* that *annihilation* is the sequel to death. When a materialist makes that claim the most he can possibly mean is that he has a deep intimation of, a strong feeling or a predilection for, this negative conclusion. And such predilection is often the parent of his argument, as Sir Oliver Lodge has shown. But, as long as forty years ago Tyndall disqualified materialism to sit as a juror in the case of personal survival after death by his pronouncement of three incontrovertible propositions:

1. "The passage from the physics of the brain to the facts of consciousness is unthinkable."

2. "While a definite thought and a definite molecular action in the brain occur simultane-

ously, we do not possess the intellectual organ which would enable us to pass, by a process of reasoning, from the one to the other."

3. "The chasm between these physical processes and the facts of consciousness remains as intellectually impassable, as in prescientific ages."

Thus did the distinguished physicist take the shine out of the materialist's claim. The latter's contention was that "consciousness is a mere epi-phenomenon" or by-product of life, itself "a physico-chemical process of protoplasmic structure and cell-organization." But in the light of Tyndall's first proposition, this definition of consciousness and of life is reduced to a mere oracle because it does not in the least explain the nature of life which is *sui generis*, neither energy nor matter, and cannot be explained in terms of anything else, — a stimulating, organizing principle" Sir Oliver calls it, "directing energy and thereby controlling the arrangements of movements of matter and in no way entering into the scheme of physics." <sup>2</sup>

As for consciousness being an "epi-phenomenon" of a "physico-chemical process"

<sup>2</sup> "Raymond" Sir Oliver Lodge, p. 290.

and ceasing when the brain has been injured — just as the music of a harp ceases when the instrument is broken — all we can accurately say, all that we are scientifically warranted in saying, is that the *manifestation* of consciousness has ceased, *i.e.*, consciousness has been lost, not necessarily destroyed, as Sir Oliver remarked in commenting upon Dr. Mott's essay.<sup>3</sup>

We have no right to say consciousness is non-existent any more than we have a right to say that without a continuous supply of oxygen consciousness cannot exist, simply because we do not know that oxygen or any other form of matter has anything to do with consciousness. All that we know, all that we have a right to say, is that “without a continuous supply of oxygen consciousness gives no physical sign.”<sup>4</sup>

In his effort to explain consciousness in terms of matter the old time materialist asked only for as many atoms as there are chemical elements. But even when provided with all these, how shall he educe consciousness? How can the concurrence of any number of atoms

<sup>3</sup> *Cp.* p. 328.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 329

result in consciousness? His answer was, by positing "polarity" and "gravitation" as among the eternal properties of matter. And when pressed further to account for what is observed in consciousness he added "memory" to these eternal properties. But the focusing of attention upon an object to be remembered is a mental not a physiological process. In short, the materialist behaved like the bank-depositor who appeared to have met every financial claim fully and honorably by the issuing of cheques, whereas his account was overdrawn after the cashing of his first cheque. So the materialist in order to explain consciousness had to draw upon his original deposit of matter for more than it actually contained at the start and thus he forced his insolvent theory into the hands of a receiver. In mining-regions there obtains a practice known as "salting a claim." In order to enhance the value of an essentially poor property it is "salted" with gold-dust. So the materialist salted matter with mental qualities, not one of which could be taken out except as it had first been put into matter. Collocate, refine, attenuate the atoms of gray-matter in the brain as much as you please, your *thought* still remains ab-

solutely unlike the whitest and most tenuous cerebral tissue.

It is noteworthy that while this materialism was made in Germany and imported by England and America, it was a German who first laid bare the fallacies lurking in Büchner's "Matter and Force" (published in 1845), as well as in the later "beer and cheese" philosophy of the "*Freien Gemeinden*," according to which matter and force are the key to explication of all that is. Dubois-Reymond, born at Berlin in 1818 and buried there in 1896, was a specialist in the physiology of the nervous system and it was on this physiology that these materialists based their notion that thought and consciousness and emotion are after all but the resultant of chemical action and reaction in the nerves set a-vibrating by external or internal irritation. Dubois-Reymond recognized the fact of such irritation, but he also recognized the deeper fact of our utter ignorance of *how*, from that irritation and the response to it in the central organ, thought and feeling are born. Why the concept chair should be formed when the periphtric nerve is excited by touching the arm of the chair; why, when I look at yonder gas-

jet, I get the concept of light; why, as I look at a crevice in the roof the same excitation of my optic nerve gives me the concept of solar rays piercing the aperture; why the similar excitation of the same nerve gives rise to dissimilar concepts — remains a mystery which no science has yet explained, or according to Dubois-Reymond, ever can explain. Nor, again, is the mystery of emotion unraveled by the physiological formula. Why, under the same nervous irritation have we at one time the sensation of pleasure and, at another, one of pain? Here too, is a chasm as unbridged as ever and which this eminent physiologist felt would never be spanned.<sup>5</sup> Thus did this master of natural science show forth its limitations, teaching the dogmatists a needed lesson in intellectual modesty and pricking the bubble of Büchner's cocksureness that matter and force are the solvents of Nature's mysteries and that cerebral chemistry is capable of accounting for all the phenomena of thought and feeling. The most delicate fibers of gray matter woven in the loom of science or of the imagination cannot be spun into an emotion. You can resolve

<sup>5</sup> See his noble essay "*Die Sieben Welträtsel*."



a tear into oxygen, hydrogen, chlorine and sodium, but the mystery of grief remains as unexplained as ever. The difference between the tone of the marriage bell which begins happiness and that of the funeral-toll which ends it, cannot be stated in terms of "heat-waves" or of the "concurrence of brain-atoms."

Whether or not mind can operate without a brain remains an *open* question, despite all the argumentation of the materialists. *And this is the only vital issue in the discussion.* Were brain and thought related to each other as cause and effect, then, indeed, would the contention of the materialist be established, *viz.:* no brain, no thought. But their relation is not one of cause and effect. Rather is it comparable to the relation of the wire to electricity in pre-Marconi days. Without the wire there could be no *manifestation* of electricity, but the wire does not produce the electricity, nor would electricity cease to be were the wire destroyed. So, for aught we know, it may be with the human mind. It may exist without a brain; it may continue after the brain has been destroyed; it may make itself manifest to other personalities by means of some other

organ than a brain. Thought, therefore, would not necessarily cease were the brain destroyed, any more than would electricity without the wire. And even as Marconi's "wireless" has made electricity manifest so, for aught we know, may thought by "brain-less" be yet made manifest.

From physics we learn that heat, light and electricity are interconvertible, because all are modes of motion. Motion is their common factor. But, between moving particles of gray matter in the brain, and thought, there is no such relation; on the contrary, there is a chasm that has never yet been bridged. If a cause is to be found for thought it must be of the same *kind* as thought, and no such adequate cause has yet been discerned. How physical brain-processes are connected with the facts of consciousness still remains a mystery. Browning, in "Abt Vogler," furnishes a suggestive parallel here. Could we explain how, from the physical, musical notes, psychical emotional states are awakened, we would have solved the riddle of the universe. Hence his injunction to the reader, reverently to bow before this mystery of music, as inexplicable indeed as the whence of thought.

Consider it well: each tone of our scale in itself is  
naught;  
It is everywhere in the world — loud, soft, and all  
is said:  
Give it to me to use! I mix it with two in my  
thought:  
And, there! Ye have heard and seen: Consider  
and bow the head!

No, materialism has not disproved the reality of life after death, and till it does no one need apologize for retaining his faith. All that science has proved is that material processes *accompany* mental states, not that the latter are *caused* by the former. Science has proved that the molecular motion of the gray matter in the brain is *concomitant* with thought, not that it is the *cause* of thought. Science has demonstrated that the eye is the organ of sight, but not the seer; the ear, the organ of hearing but not the hearer; the brain the organ of thought but not the thinker. The brain, then, as I have said elsewhere, is only a machine for making our thoughts and emotions apparent to others. At death the machine breaks but for all that science knows, the operator may still possess what he had to communicate.<sup>6</sup> The

<sup>6</sup> See my "Faith in a Future Life," chap. v.

materialist asks, what reason is there to expect that after the dissolution of brain-matter, consciousness will remain, any more than that the wetness of water will remain after it has been resolved into hydrogen and oxygen? Assuredly, so far as the limits of our experience and knowledge are concerned, we have no warrant at all for such an expectation. But what does this argument amount to so far as disproving immortality goes? Absolutely nothing. What right have we to assume that because we know thought only in association with brain, therefore no thought can exist without brain? What right have we to say that "the mind of man is the totality of his brain-processes in the same sense that the flame of the candle is the totality of its combustible processes" and therefore that man's soul is extinguished by death as completely as the candle's light is extinguished when it is blown out? The truth is that in all such statements two separate phenomena are quite unbridged, the one physical, the other psychical, and therefore not to be treated as in the same category. Until science can prove that thought is impossible apart from brain-physics, faith remains in possession of the ground. All we know is that brain and

thought go together in our experience without being able to say that the latter is *caused* by the former. Borrowing an illustration from Professor Adler, we may liken their relation to two citizens, walking arm in arm into a town and through the town, but parting company when they pass the city limits. So brain and thought come arm in arm, as it were, into the town of life but there is no known reason why they may not separate when they pass out of sight of the citizens, because their relation is not one of cause and effect but only of concomitance or simultaneity.

By the year 1885 the crude materialism of Büchner,—espoused with such zest by the “intellectuals” of social democracy fifteen years before,—was wholly discredited. Lange, in his “History of Materialism,” devotes a brilliant chapter to the story of its repudiation by all the leading minds of Europe.

But hardly had the faith in a future life been reborn when the veteran Haeckel dealt it a fresh blow, broaching a theory of “mind-producing atoms,” whose “mind-sides” being in touch, “maintained thought” till the dissolution of these atoms at death. To the venerable Coryphæus of the materialistic school

it seemed that now, at last, the doctrine of personal immortality was downed for all time. But no, with the further progress of brain-research it was found that Haeckel is wholly wrong in his belief that the atoms to which he attributed "mind-sides" are in touch. On the contrary, there exists a "discontinuity of matter." Inter-atomic spaces in the brain, there are; gaps, separating its material atoms. Not only have these atoms no contact, but the inter-atomic spaces greatly predominate over the atoms, so that out of the cubic contents of a human brain only a few hundredths consist of material particles. According to Risteen, a recognized authority on the subject, "the distance from the center of one molecule to the center of its neighbor averages ten times the molecular diameter," while "of the space occupied by brain-pulp, or any so-called 'solid flesh,' at least 999,999 parts are occupied by something other than atomic matter." If, then, Haeckel's mind-sided atoms be separated, how shall they unite thought with thought, premise with conclusion? For all such mental processes a unitary and continuous medium is needed. And if these inter-atomic spaces be occupied by an imponderable, intangible,

elusive substance, a "mentiferous" ether, analogous to the "luminiferous" ether, then we have an intermediary between brain-cells and thought, "an immaterial substance of the self," as an Oxford professor has called it, and because immaterial or etheric, therefore incognizable by our senses. Here, then, we enter a region where sight, hearing and touch are powerless either as observers or as interpreters and where a "chasm" exists between mentiferous ether and thought even as between Tyndall's "molecular motion of gray matter in the brain" and thought.

As a result of this recent scientific research it is as difficult to-day to find a champion of materialism as it was fifty years ago to find an opponent of it. And whereas for five decades the task of dethroning materialism devolved for the most part upon dogmatic theologians, to-day it is physicists who are conspicuous as disclaimers, *on scientific grounds*, of any sympathy whatever with materialism.

In so far then as the arguments of the materialists were designed to break down all reasonable supports for faith in personal continuity after death, those arguments have signally failed.



But before leaving this aspect of our subject it will be well to glance for a moment at the doctrine of evolution which in the estimation of many a layman has been construed as synonymous with or tantamount to materialism and as leading directly to a negative answer regarding man's survival of death. The evolutionist tells us that our earth is dying, doomed to become a cold dead world, like the moon. Has it then been evolved from the primordial nebula with no ulterior purpose than its annihilation, or does it shelter some indestructible good that shall survive the decay of physical phenomena? Unless something worth while shall survive this ultimate disaster, evolution must be set down as a senseless fiasco and farce. If that process, in the course of which there appeared a Homer, a Plato, a Dante, a Shakespeare, a Goethe, a Darwin, is to end in a harvest of corpses, leaving no permanent good behind, then we must liken the process to the act of a crazy sculptor who, after life-long toil upon a magnificent masterpiece, broke it into fragments. Or we might compare the process to a drama with a prologue and a series of absorbingly interesting acts, in the last of which the lights go out

and the whole thing vanishes like a dream.

Tennyson, whose "In Memoriam" was published nine years before Darwin's "Origin of Species," held the selfsame view. Contemplating the age-long process of evolution, with Man as Nature's latest, highest product, the poet exclaimed:

And he, shall he,—  
Man, her last work, who seemed so fair,  
Such splendid purpose in his eyes,  
Who rolled the psalm to wintry skies,  
Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,  
Who loved, who suffered countless ills,  
Who battled for the True, the Just,—  
Be blown about the desert dust,  
Or sealed within the iron hills?  
No more? A monster then, a dream,  
A discord. Dragons of the prime,  
That tare each other in their slime,  
Were mellow music matched with him.

The poet's point is that no *man* would create such a world, no human being would be guilty of evolving such a system only to see it end in failure and chaos, the most hideous of all mockeries.

Yet we must frankly recognize the fact that for the evolution-process we can claim only this: it points to something other than noth-

ingness as the goal of the process. This much we may legitimately claim as a reasoned probability. As such, we may say, the outcome of Nature's age-long process, whatever it be, will justify the process. As a reasoned probability, Leverrier, in 1845, announced the existence of an unknown planet. In the following year "Neptune" was seen and precisely at the place where the astronomer had predicted it would appear. As a reasoned probability, Professor Ramsay affirmed the existence of a gas never yet discovered by any of the senses and lo, "neon" appeared. Now, just as the scientific world believed in the reality of both the planet and the gas before their discovery, so we may believe, as a reasoned probability, that the outcome of the evolutionary process will be worth all it cost.

Clearly, then, neither the materialist nor the evolutionist has furnished any objective evidence that invalidates faith in a future life. Fifty years ago their claims struck terror into many a human heart even as did the recent doctrine of Haeckel, but with the putting of those claims to the proof comes a rebirth of the faith which it was thought had been forever destroyed.

And in Part III it was shown that the objective evidence, adduced by Sir Oliver Lodge, in support of the spiritistic hypothesis fails to satisfy even as did the objective evidence of the materialist in support of the thesis that man is dust and returns to dust. Is there, then, perchance, any *subjective* evidence to which we may turn and find the faith in a future life reborn once more? There is, if I mistake not, a moral experience which all souls have and which furnishes, not demonstration of future life, but the nearest approach to it possible in the present state of our knowledge. Let me explain. Most of us must confess that we do not live the moral life either very deeply or very intensely. None the less is such moral living constantly in our power and the point I wish to make is that the more we succeed in our endeavor thus to live the moral life, deeply and intensely, the more persuaded we become that there is something within us that cannot perish, the more profoundly aware we become of the spiritual (and hence imperishable) nature of our essential selfhood. Similarly, if it be our privilege to enjoy relationship with some rare soul, one who lives on a lofty spiritual plane, one who refines and inspires us, then

are we made to feel that here also, in this exceptional personality, is something that must survive death.

No one can live an ephemeral, selfish, worldly life and then expect by some intellectual process to arrive at faith in personal survival of death. One gets that faith only when finding in oneself, or in another soul, something infinitely worth preserving.

There is a beautiful legend of the mountains that aptly illustrates this truth. 'Tis the legend of a shepherd lad, tending his father's flock, who saw or thought he saw a beautiful figure of womanly grace and charm, moving before him as he climbed the heights. Again and again the fair vision greeted his sight so that for his rapt imagination it prefigured an inspiration and guide in the conduct of life. And when the dark experiences came to him as they come to us all, he tenderly and reverently besought the fair figure to return — "appear, oh appear, beloved spirit, but if this happiness be denied me then let me make my life better and worthy to share thine immortality because thy gracious light has been shed upon my way."

Who of us has not known in actual life such

a woman, one who exercised a mighty, ever-present inspiring influence, persuading us not only of the eternality of her own spirit but also prompting the faith that through our response to that inspiration something worthy of perpetuation inheres also in us.

What Plato, Dante, Leonardo, Goethe and Browning experienced, we too may experience and like them find that nothing is so difficult as disbelief in immortality.

They simply could not think of their spiritual selfhood as ceasing, because they felt the urge within them to continue the pursuit of the ideal. Many a thoughtful man, it is true, has felt himself intellectually driven to agnosticism, or even perhaps to outright rejection of the immortal hope. But if his moral nature does not revolt at what his intellect prescribes, it would be proof that he had never lived the moral life intensely or deeply, so inevitably does such living compel revulsion from the thought of annihilation at death. It was this conviction that had mastered Tennyson when, in his "Wages," he raised the question, what wages would virtue have?

"She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of  
the just,

To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky; —

Give her the wages of *going on* and *not* to die.”

Recall Professor Adler’s noble statement of this crucial truth: “ We admit that we do not so much desire immortality as that we do not see how we can escape it; on moral grounds we do not see how our being can stop short of the attainment marked out for it, of the goal set up for it; the best within us, our true being, cannot perish, in regard to *that* the notion of death is irrelevant.”<sup>8</sup> “ Man, unlike the products of Nature, is not a mere wave that rises and subsides, a shadow that passes over the scene — there is in him that which does not deserve to die and will not die.”

Let me supplement this quotation with one of my own, from the book to which reference has already been made.

“ What are we here for? We are here to realize the infinite possibilities of our being, or, to speak more accurately, we are here to enter on the realization of those possibilities. This realization is the supreme good; the will that strives for the supreme good is the good

<sup>8</sup> “ Life and Destiny,” pp. 38 sq. *The Standard*, April, 1918.



will, and the good will cannot die in a universe that is rational and moral. We enter the world with a moral obligation imposed upon us — develop the real that you are into the ideal you ought to be. Nature has intended that we should strive for realization of that immanent ideal. But, clearly, that ideal can never be *completely* realized; it can be only eternally approximated.”

Yes, the ideal is unattainable and loyal pursuit of the unattainable ideal is our highest possible attainment. Perfection is not a final, static, completed moral state, rather is it an evolving process. The ideal flies ever before us and most passionately do we pursue it when it seems furthest away. Our task is one in which everlasting progress may be made, not one that can be once for all fulfilled.

And if, on the one hand, it depresses us to realize this, to realize that no achievement is ever final, but that each is only the vantage-ground from which we climb to some higher manifestation of power — at each new level broadening the perspective and deepening the content of our life,— on the other hand, it is mightily inspiring and cheering to realize that no statical heaven, however finished and fine,

could ever permanently satisfy us. As a temporary resting place for tired souls we might welcome it indeed, but once rested and refreshed, we would wish to resume the upward way.

At Oberammergau, on the morning after the Passion Play, I climbed the nearby hill that rises behind the imposing theater. The road was rather steep, tortuous, and stony. At intervals of sixty or seventy yards, benches had been placed to break the continuity of the climb. Before each bench there was erected a crude picture, representing a scene from the closing days of Jesus' life. These resting places with their pictures, are called in Roman Catholic countries "stations of the Cross." Thus the pedestrian pauses as he climbs and as he pauses there looks down upon him a great thought out of the life of the Nazarene. Then, rested and refreshed, he resumes the climb, until at last the final "station of the Cross" is reached.

Strip this story of its sectarian implications and what remains is a condensed statement of what our human life must be. We must be climbing, we must get tired, we must have moments of rest; moments in which there may

look down upon us the great thought of the infinitely-perfect to which we tend.

Most of us only begin the upward ascent, we reach but a little way up the mount Perfection when our climb is stopped by death. Here, then, on the one hand, is Nature imposing upon us the moral obligation "Be ye perfect," realize the ideal; and here, on the other hand, is Death, stopping us in our upward march and seemingly bringing that moral obligation to naught. How, I ask, shall we solve the riddle? Clearly, we are forced to accept one or the other of two alternatives; either death is not the end of life and there is opportunity beyond death for continuing the ascent of the spiritual mountain, or else Nature defeats the end she had in view in the creating of man. That, I believe, is the logical alternative to which we are forced if we do close and consistent thinking. Nay, more, we can go one step further and say that the loyal, faithful soul, the soul that has been steadfastly loyal in the pursuit of the ideal, in the ascent of the mount Perfection, that soul is entitled to continue the pursuit when death has cut short the series of earthly endeavors. If this be a moral universe, if at the heart of the universe

the principle of justice obtain, then, I say, the loyal, faithful soul, the man or woman who has consecratedly pursued the ideal, is thereby entitled, has a right to continue that pursuit. If we loyally pursue the ideal and that pursuit is the end which Nature has decreed in creating us, then she would defeat her end and be irrational did she allow death to cut off that pursuit. And if faithful pursuit constitutes a right to continue it, Nature would be unethical were she to disregard that right. Thus does personal immortality become an ethical necessity, as was said by the lamented Francis E. Abbot, to whom I am indebted for the thought that has been here worked out. And this is as near to demonstration as it is possible for us to come, in the present state of our knowledge.

There can be but one reasonable, satisfying view of our earthly pilgrimage. It is that of a process of growth, upward and onward endlessly toward the ultimate Ideal. If, then, when that pilgrimage ends, our goal be still, like a star, shining in the distant heaven, and we, from the low plane of our present attainment, looking up to that star, what escape is there from the frightful unreason of such a situation? It is, so far as I can see, that death

does *not* terminate the pilgrimage, but that somehow, somewhere, provision will be made for the perpetuation of what is essentially spiritual in us, to the end that it may fulfill, in ways beyond our ken, the supreme purpose of its being.

Far be it from any of us to dogmatize on the question of personal immortality. To me it seems the only possible explanation of the mystery of our life. Yet is our reason limited in its powers and we must therefore beware of the tone of finality in our discoursing upon it. Who knows but that in the universal plan not a single human being is accounted of sufficient value to the universe to require his preservation? It may be that the universal plan provides for some altogether different solution than that of personal immortality as popularly conceived. But that the solution will be both rational and ethical I am bound to believe. I am bound to believe that my essential spiritual selfhood will be perpetuated in the eternal order, all the while (with Emerson) utterly "incurious" as to the *mode* of that perpetuation, undesirous to pry into the ultimate secret of the cosmos, serenely ready for whatever destiny has in store for me, calmly trusting that

whatever is best will be wrought out in the universal plan.

There is, then, a concatenation of moral ideals and moral experiences that have given rebirth to the faith in personal survival of death. The haunting sense of incompleteness of character, the consciousness of an infinitely perfect goal, the sense of a constant residuum of capacity to approximate it, no matter how many times we slip back; the moral obligation Nature has imposed on us to pursue it, the conviction forced upon us, when we earnestly, ardently obey, or when we see complete obedience in another, *viz.*, that there is something in that person, as in us, which cannot cease — such is the order of ethical thought and experience which, like the heart, hastes my panting soul to the waterbrooks to quench its thirst at the eternal stream of faith in a future life.

We are stationed here on this earth, between two great ignorances. For, when we talk of origins we don't know exactly whence we came and when we are discussing destiny we don't know exactly whither we go. What then remains between these two ignorances? There remains the kind of behavior we adopt. We have to choose between living like immortals

and living like the day-fly, dead at sundown. Grant that the mystery of the origin of things is insoluble; grant that the mystery of the hereafter is equally impenetrable; there yet remains a higher and a lower order of life, and a choice to be made between them. Accept, if you will, the simile which likens life to a midnight sea illumined by a single streak of light, and man to a ship, crossing that lightened path-way, emerging from the darkness and presently disappearing in the future darkness, yet none the less would you think it worth while, even in that brief moment, to catch the light upon your sails and while you live, to live in the light!

When, in our pursuit of knowledge concerning man's persistence as a spiritual being, we reach the place where knowledge fails, faith must hold sway. The ethics of investigation on post-mortem conditions requires of us that, having caught the light upon our sails, we trustfully steer our ship forward and with the requisite moral heroism face the ulterior darkness. If Calderon be right in regarding life as but a dream, then 'tis for us to live well throughout the dream and trust the waking, whatever it may be. Since we cannot prove



either the negations of doubt or the affirmations of faith, we can none the less

“be wise in this dream-world of ours;  
Nor take our dial for our deity,  
But make the passing shadow serve our will.”

Perhaps in no better way can I bring my thought to a telling conclusion than by retelling the incident related of Dr. Pritchett, during his presidency of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He was touring the Bernese Alps, from Badzeuck, via the Gemmi-Pass, to Kandersteg. When he reached the summit of the pass he looked vainly about for a path that would lead to his destination. All that he saw was a narrow, faintly-marked trail on the surface of the huge granite boulder, stretching down the steep mountain side. Such a trail it was as a mountain sheep might risk, but hardly to be ventured upon by human feet. Concluding he had missed the right road the pedestrian was about to retrace his steps when he spied a little Swiss boy about forty feet away. “Where is Kandersteg?” the president exclaimed. To which the lad replied, “I don’t know, sir, but (pointing to this hazardous trail) *that* is the way to it.”

Without in the least realizing it, the boy had summarized the whole practical philosophy of life. *If you are on the right road you don't need to see your destination.* In such a situation — and it is symbolic of that in which we all find ourselves, no matter what our vocation or lot in life may be — there are only three alternatives open to us: First, we may sit down, if our inertia be in excess of our motive-power. Second, we may turn back, if our desire to reminisce be greater than our prophetic proclivity. Third, we may go bravely and trustfully on.

In the sacred name of the latent possibilities that reside in each one of us, and of that constant residuum of capacity for progress that is present in even the lowest of us, I say, let us go on and take the ethics of an immortal being for our guide.

THE END









